



# GRACE JOURNAL

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# THE NEW DOCTRINES AND THE NEW DANGERS

HERMAN A. HOYT  
President, Grace Theological Seminary

The developments of our times have projected a whole host of new things into civilization. More new things have appeared during the last sixty years than in all the previous history of the world. At the turn of the century the automobile was invented. This was soon followed by the airplane. Then came radio, television, atomic fission, electronic devices, space craft, and automation.

As a result new dangers followed swiftly in the wake of these developments. Natural barriers of land and sea separating nationalities melted away before the march of automobile, airplane, radio, and atomic fission. The fierce struggle of two world wars decimated the earth, and the third war is now in the making. Proposed interplanetary travel now accentuates the perils that lie ahead. Automation has introduced new perils into the struggle of class and caste for survival in this industrialized era.

New doctrines too have emerged within the professing church which lie more basically at the root of the perils that threaten society. These new doctrines all purport to be of divine origin, and supposedly rest upon a Biblical foundation. Being a part of the times in which we live, they are vigorously clamoring for attention. Four of these will constitute the substance of this message: the new morality; the new theology; the new eschatology; and the new orthodoxy.

## THE NEW MORALITY IS THE OLD IMMORALITY WITH ECCLESIASTICAL SANCTION 2 Tim. 3:2-4, 6, 13

The center of this so-called new morality is the exaltation of self. That is where the description begins. "For men shall be lovers of their own selves." This is clearly the choice of self as the supreme good. This is the very essence of sin. It was the choice of self as over against God that initiated sin into the world. As a result there has developed a psychology which ignores sin and makes the self attractive. In this passage the word for love points to attraction as its basis. Out of this grows a devotion to self that produces a warm, personal, unreasoning bond of emotion and affection.

The course of this so-called new morality can be traced directly to this emphasis upon self. Everything that follows is made moral by exalting the self to the place of supreme good.

The motions and movements of self become the measuring rod for all activity. That this sort of psychology is now in vogue is only too evident as one surveys and analyzes the thinking in the educational world today. In a recent educational conference dealing with student development the freedom of the individual was the dominant point of emphasis, and this without concern for the consequences.

Where there is love of self as the moderating principle there is bound to be the fruit as described in the opening verses of 2 Timothy 3. There will be love of money, bragging on self, holding self above others, freedom to affirm untruth, disobedience to parents, ungratefulness, unholy activity, absence of natural affection, the breaking of contracts, slandering, uncontrollableness, ferocity, despisers of good men, treachery, presumption, personal inflation, and attraction to sensualism. This stands in amazing contrast with the wholesome fruitage where there is the monitoring influence of attraction to a supreme sovereign above self.

You may be sure that the seeds of this sort of morality are now beginning to appear all across the world in unbridled excess. Witness the insurrections among students on the campuses over the world, the riots in the major cities of the world in the name of freedom, the gross sensualism into which the human race is now plunging with utter abandon.

The climax of this so-called new morality is yet ahead. For "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (13). This means that the trend is down. It means that the source of this declension is men who are rotten at heart. It means that the course of this declension is progressive through deterrents to lower depths of degradation. It means that the force of this declension grows out of the ever enlarging moral and spiritual deception. Having cast dust into the air, men everywhere are complaining that they cannot see clearly enough to explain the trends.

#### THE NEW THEOLOGY IS THE OLD PANTHEISM IN A MODERN SETTING

2 Tim. 3:5, 7-9

Pantheism is essentially the reduction of reality to the narrow limits of the natural level. This means that there is no God before, above, outside, and separate from creation. All that belongs to the natural order is God, and God is the natural order. Pantheism is the identification of God with nature. In this new theology you will note three things:

1. There is the perpetuation of forms without the secret of power, that is, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (5). This undoubtedly means that the forms of Christianity which the Church has practiced through her history will continue to be practiced. There will be the practice of the ordinances, such as baptism and the eucharist. There will be the gathering of professed Christians for public worship. There will be the outward forms of song, sermon, prayer and creed. And all these forms will purport to signify godliness.

But there will be the denial of the power. The secret of godliness, the Lord Jesus Christ (I Tim. 3:16), will be denied. He will be denied as to His historic incarnation in human flesh, and to his personal incarnation in believers by the operation of the Holy Spirit. As a

matter of faith the forms will be observed, but as a matter of fact the person to whom they point will be rejected. In Eternity magazine appeared this account many years ago. The Presbytery met in the church of Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse. The meeting as usual was to be opened with the eucharist. Knowing that the rank and file denied the spiritual realities to which it referred, he pled with them not to go through the forms. But they rejected his plea and carried through with the usual forms.

2. There is the promulgation of facts without comprehension of meaning. As stated in verse 7, they will be "Ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." In the recent volume Honest to God, a rehash and popularization of Tillich's theology, there is an accumulation of facts on a wide scale of knowledge now becoming available from the study of the world in which we live. Failure to see these facts in relation to the whole of reality led the author, Dr. John Robinson, to reject the language and explanation of the Bible and seek an interpretation which is nothing more than a retreat to pantheism.

In the explosion of knowledge that is sweeping the world, the facts of astronomy, geology, and anthropology are outrunning the facts of theology. As a result men are suffering from a lowering intellectual skyline and a diminishing horizon. Within these narrowing limits and on this lower level of visibility, they are not able to come to a full and rational comprehension of the facts at hand. Unwilling to wait for more light, they rush to faulty conclusions, the first of which is to reject the teaching of the Bible, and the second of which is to construct a new theology. But this theology is not new. It is simply the error of men across the centuries, the old pantheism couched in the language and learning of the twentieth century.

3. There is the presentation of feats of the supernatural without being divine. "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith" (8). To understand this allusion, one must go back to the book of Exodus (7:11, 22). Moses cast his rod before Pharaoh and it became a serpent. The magicians of Egypt did likewise. With his rod Moses smote the waters of Egypt and they became blood. And again the magicians did likewise. The simulation appeared to be so genuine, that Pharaoh rejected the word of the Lord through Moses.

This is now occurring again in the world. There is a resurgence of paganism in such palpable forms that to the average individual it is truth. The multiplication of cults is gathering momentum. They are able to simulate as though genuine the miracles of the early days of the Church and thus bait along a vast concourse of Christendom. To add to this, Evangelicalism is reinterpreting the Christian faith to fit the new phenomena. Such activities as speaking in tongues, healing, and explorations into the nature and elements of mankind are spreading. No effort is made to discover whether the message accompanying these activities harmonizes with the message of the word of God (Deut. 13; Isa. 8:20).

#### THE NEW ESCHATOLOGY IS THE OLD UNIVERSALISM SEEKING TO REESTABLISH ITSELF. 2 Tim. 3:9; 4:1, 10

The new eschatology removes a sovereign judge from consideration. The new theology of pantheism makes no provision for a transcendent God. Without God man becomes the measure

of his morality and is responsible only to himself. This opens the path to perversion so that men may do that which is right in their own eyes without fear of consequences. The path of paganism was ever down, and by the same token evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. There is no fear of God before their eyes. There is no sovereign judge to face. There is no irrevocable sentence to confront. There is no infinite penalty to experience.

But such folly shall be made manifest, just as it was in the case of Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. 3:9). For there is a sovereign judge to face. "The Lord Jesus Christ . . . shall judge the quick and the dead" (2 Tim. 4:1). This is the more fearful for this judge has already endured in His own body a demonstration of divine wrath in that He died for the ungodly. His resurrection from the dead guarantees that He will judge the world of wicked men in righteousness (Acts 17:31). In that the world of wicked men have rejected His death in their behalf and have elected to bear their own punishment, the world has placed itself in the most vulnerable position. And God will vindicate Himself in this hour of judgment.

The new eschatology rationalizes away the second coming of Christ. The new theology of pantheism makes a second coming of Christ impossible. Since reality has been reduced to the realm of the natural, and God is identified with the natural, then it is impossible for any intervention into this order from without. There can be no introduction of new elements and no interruption of the present order. As the scoffers say, "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pet. 3:4). This fact lulls the conscience to sleep and conditions men for continuation in sin.

But such reasoning is false. For the sovereign judge, the Lord Jesus Christ is about to appear to inaugurate His kingdom (2 Tim. 4:1). Men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, shall proceed no further. In one mighty burst of brilliance Christ will vindicate Himself. He will halt wicked men in their headlong progress into sin, and the folly of their reasoning will be publicly exposed (2 Tim. 3:9; 4:1).

The new eschatology reduces the supernatural reign to the present order. The new theology of pantheism which removes God from the scene, also removes the possibility of a coming crisis and the introduction of a supernatural kingdom in the earth. Like Demas of old, men who invent a new eschatology have forsaken the truth, having loved this present world (2 Tim. 4:10). Everything from the bold denial of a coming kingdom to the interpretation of the church in terms of the kingdom, all these lead in the same direction. These denials are calculated to remove all hope of future good supernaturally realized. Instead, their teachings center upon the efforts of men to establish some sort of kingdom.

But according to the word of God Jesus Christ will appear and establish an everlasting kingdom of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:1). In this kingdom He will reign as sovereign. The saved will be exalted to the place of glory with Him. Sinners will be expelled from this kingdom. And all sighing and sorrow and shadows will flee away. This present world has nothing to offer that will quite compare.



THE NEW ORTHODOXY IS THE OLD HETERODOXY PRESENTED IN  
MORE SUBTLE STATEMENT. 2 Tim. 4:3-4

The new orthodoxy is set forth in the words of 2 Tim. 4:3-4. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

The motivation for the new orthodoxy is described in the phrase, "After their own lusts" (3). These desires are listed in 2 Tim. 3:2-6. They are desires that cover the entire scope of man, spirit, soul, and body. These constitute the ultimate reason for setting aside the Scriptures. Sound doctrine is divine in origin and constitutes a standard which makes no provision for the lusts of the flesh. Under this rigid standard there is nothing but friction, frustration and irritation for those who desire to live after the flesh. An accusing conscience produces nothing but dissatisfaction. There is therefore but one course of action open, and that is to render the standard inoperative, while at the same time appearing to support and submit to the Scriptures. Here is a type of people who want all the approval of those who follow the Bible, but they do not want to hold themselves to its rigid standards.

A clever mechanism is thus employed to render the Scriptures of none effect. Such people heap to themselves specious teachers who can on the one hand preach the word with such finesse that itching ears are soothed and at the same time preach in such a way that the authoritative standard disappears. This does not refer to the blatant infidel who attacks the Scriptures from without. This is something that occurs within the Church. The liberals were open and unhesitating in their attack upon the inspiration of the word of God. But at last a more subtle method has been devised. In the pious language of the neo-orthodox the same thing is being accomplished without the stigma of being labeled as an enemy of the truth. Christ is declared to be the only revelation of God. The Bible is not the revelation of God. But while reading it, it may become the word of God provided in the given situation it seems to speak to the reader with authority. But in the event it does not seem to speak to the reader with authority, then it is not the word of God.

The measure of departure from the Scriptures in such a situation finally becomes complete. "They shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (4). When the truth is no longer held, then something must be substituted in its place. The mind will not be reduced to a vacuum. In the place of divine explanation there will be substituted human invention. Men shall be turned to fables or myths. A myth is a story for the purpose of explaining something. In the Scriptures this word refers to a fiction, a fabrication, a human invention. The human explanation makes every provision for the origin of life, the kind of life that is being lived, the ethics of life, and the final outcome. It will be noticed that this mythological explanation eases the conscience for continuation in sin. Herein lies the real factor in helping to produce the new morality. Herein is the material out of which is fashioned the new theology and the new eschatology.

### Conclusion

Out of the same context come the divine directives to meet the new perils. They are three in number.

1. There must be recognition on the part of the man of God that godliness will arouse persecution in the world (2 Tim. 3:10-12). But godliness must be perpetuated in the face of the new morality.

2. There must be continuation in the word of God in the face of the new theology and the new orthodoxy as the only hope of salvation and sanctification (2 Tim. 3:14-17).

3. There must be the proclamation of the word of God in the face of the new eschatology as the only deterrent to sin and the only preparation for Christ's appearing and kingdom (2 Tim. 4:1-2).

# LIVES TRANSFORMED: AN EVIDENCE OF AUTHORITY

DONALD H. LAUNSTEIN

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"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man" (Luke 17:26). With these words and in this context Jesus Christ warned of the apostasy which should prevail in this world as His coming draws near. It appears that the basic manifestation of this apostasy in Noah's day was man's adamant refusal to listen to the Word of God. God warned Noah: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Gen. 6:3). God is here extending a period of beckoning grace. However, even though Noah preached grace for one hundred and twenty years, his hearers reacted as if God were not speaking. This is the very reaction so prevalent today. The proclamation of an infallible Word falls on deaf ears while men doubt and deny that it is the Word of God.

As it was in the day of Noah, so today man stands at the crossroads. But God has placed at this crossroads an authoritative signpost which implores one and all, "This is the way, walk ye in it" (Isa. 30:21). However, it is to be expected that Satan, the enemy of men's souls, will attempt to influence the decision of the wayfarer at this crossroads. He may not be able to remove the signpost, but he does his best to raise questions concerning its authority. Young succinctly states this as follows:

If, therefore, the Church today takes the wrong turning and finds herself in the land of despair and doubt, she has not harkened to the Guidebook, but has allowed herself to be deceived by signposts with which her enemy has tampered.<sup>1</sup>

The decisions and battles of the day are won or lost in direct relation to what a man thinks about the Word of God. If the Bible is the divinely inspired, infallible Word of God then it is the authority and not the man who studies it. This is the issue that confronts men today. Young declares:

There is, however, one battleground in particular where the fighting is raging and the battle must be fought to a finish. . . . it has to do with the very nature of the Bible itself. What is the Bible? That is the great question.<sup>2</sup>

If there was ever a day in which men desperately need to come to grips with the reality of the authority of the Word of God, it is today. But how is this to be realized? It must be

recognized that in the final analysis this battle in which man finds himself engaged is a spiritual battle. God Himself through His apostle informs us: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). Therefore, man should realize that the battle will not be won on the battlefield of his own wisdom. God speaks concerning this: ". . . the world by wisdom knew not God . . ." (1 Cor. 1:21). However, the fact that the Word is the final authority does not mean that God may not use certain truths as evidences of this authority. The Holy Spirit must do the final work of bringing the darkened soul to the light, but this does not negate the value of a given point of evidence. It was upon the basis of this contention that this investigation was conducted and this report written.

## THE QUESTION OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE WORD OF GOD

### The Attack Against Authority

Historic Christianity sat at the feet of the Holy Spirit to listen as He instructed from the pages of the Bible itself concerning its true identity. But, in contrast to this, man now is told that he sits in judgment over the Word of God and ascertains its authenticity. Liberalism, with its background of rationalism and evolutionism, came along and made man and the "Christian experience" the authority. It is the thesis of this article that an experience in Christ is of evidential value in supporting the authority of the Word of God, but this is not to say that experience is the authority. Machen called this "one of the root errors of modern liberalism." He then concluded: "Christian experience, we have just said, is useful as confirming the gospel message. But because it is necessary, many men have jumped to the conclusion that it is all that is necessary."<sup>3</sup> However, this "Christian experience" of the Liberal needs an authority before it can be admitted before the court of enquiry. This authority, he says, is the "authority of Jesus." Now this may sound fine to some, but before the Liberal admits the "words of Jesus" as his final authority they must "first be selected from the mass of the recorded words by a critical process."<sup>4</sup> This is a dangerous position. Now man is the authority who sits on the bench of judgment deciding what God has said and what He has not. In reality you have no authority. Machen well summarized this position when he said:

It is no wonder, then, that liberalism is totally different from Christianity, for the foundation is different. Christianity is founded upon the Bible. It bases upon the Bible both its thinking and its life. Liberalism on the other hand is founded upon the shifting emotions of sinful men.<sup>5</sup>

Neo-orthodoxy, having recognized the insufficiencies of liberalism, professed to return to the Word of God. But was it in reality such a return? It certainly was not a return to orthodoxy. In his clear presentation of this contemporary school of theology, Ryrie says:

It should be apparent by now that one of the chief differences between orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy relates to the Bible.

. . . . .  
In the first place, Barthians align themselves with the liberal school of

Biblical criticism. . . . The damage that liberalism has done to the Bible can never be estimated, and this is what neo-orthodoxy sides with.<sup>6</sup>

However, some will come to the defense of Neo-orthodoxy by quoting Barth, who wrote: "We believe in and with the Church that Holy Scripture as the original and legitimate witness of divine revelation is itself the Word of God."<sup>7</sup> On the surface this may appear acceptable to the orthodox theologian, but words merely convey a concept in the mind of the writer. What is Barth's concept? Ryrie summarizes his position as follows:

But beyond any doubt the more general Barthian view and the more correct one (the standard of correctness being agreement on the meaning of all the words used in the statement) is that the Bible becomes [emphasis mine] the Word of God.<sup>8</sup>

Now, when the Neo-orthodox maintains that the Bible "becomes" the Word of God rather than that it "is" the Word of God, the doctrine of inspiration is seriously affected. With such positions as these, the conservative theologian is not content.

### The Claim of Authority

A cursory study of history should reveal to man his utter failure in every attempt to reach up to God. Observation alone is sufficient to justify the abandonment of any position that maintains the improvement of mankind and his ability to bring in the kingdom. Herbert Spencer in his book First Principles expressed this inadequacy. He wrote: ". . . since man cannot reach up to a knowledge of God, even as the eagle cannot fly out of the air, therefore God must forever remain the unknown and unknowable."<sup>9</sup> Spencer is right when he observes that man in himself cannot reach up to God, but it does not necessarily follow that it is impossible for God to reach down to man. This is precisely what the Bible declares that God did, not only in the Person of His Son, the Living Word, but also in the Bible, the Written Word. The Bible clearly states concerning itself: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God . . ." (2 Tim. 3:16). Not only does God tell us that He gave us the Bible, but He also tells us how: "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). This does not sound like human origination, but rather like Divine presentation.

Acceptance of this position necessitates the conclusion that God has spoken. The fact that God, if He exists, must have the power to speak should be readily conceded by those who consider Him. That He has infallibly spoken is maintained by those who know Him. If He has infallibly spoken and those words are recorded in the Bible, then that Book is authoritative.

### The Need for Authority

In a study of all theologies other than that of the orthodox position, one is impressed in the final analysis with the fact that man becomes his own authority. This is seen in the critically destroyed Bible of the Liberal, the "inspiring" but not "inspired" Bible of the Neo-orthodox, and the "tradition" of Roman Catholicism. But is this really acceptable? This leaves the

Good-Ship-Man adrift without a rudder upon the constantly shifting tides of the sea of intellectual subjectivism. Man needs an external authority, but one in which he can implicitly trust. Thomas declares this need in the following words: "Authority is needed in every walk of life, and it is also essential in connection with religion. Man, even as man, needs a guide. But still more, man as a sinner needs an authority."<sup>10</sup>

### The Reality of Authority

It is this need for authority which the Bible itself claims to fulfill. A study of the Old Testament does not reveal an attitude of "I think," "it seems to me," or even a "listen to me," but rather an authoritative "thus saith the Lord." Such phrases as "the Lord spake," "the word of the Lord came," or "the Lord said," are used 3,808 times.<sup>11</sup> Either the Old Testament is what it claims to be or else we are faced with the fact that the authors of most of the thirty-nine books of which it is composed were some of the greatest blasphemers man has ever known. However, this is not the impression with which one is left upon reading it.

This same conviction is found in the New Testament. The apostles and even Christ Himself so viewed the Bible. Jesus Christ said: "The Scriptures cannot be broken" (John 10:35). This is further seen in the Scriptural formula "for thus it is written by the prophets," as recorded for instance in Matthew 2:5. The verb used here is in the perfect tense denoting the abiding character of action which is passed and could be translated, "it stands written."

An honest appraisal of the testimony of Scripture to itself leads one to the conclusion that it claims to be God's Word and hence authoritative.

### The Recognition of Authority

What one does with a given authority, whether he misinterprets it or chooses to disregard it, does not negate that authority any more than driving fifty miles an hour in a thirty mile-an-hour speed zone can be excused before the judge by the offender pleading that he did not think that the sign really meant what it said or that he just did not see it. That a given individual does not recognize the authority of the Word of God does not cancel that authority.

### The Question of Evidence

It is not the intention of this article to establish the authority of the Word of God; this was settled in the council rooms of eternity. It may be, however, that God may choose in His infinite wisdom to use a given point of evidence as part of the total work of enlightenment by the Holy Spirit in bringing an individual to the recognition of this authority.

### The Admission of the Evidence

There are many points of evidence which can be discerned in a study of the history of the Word of God. One such evidence is its power to transform a life. That God by His own power transforms individuals cannot be denied. This is one of the basic realities of Christianity.

However, is it possible for God to bring about this transformation on the basis of the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God and that alone? If it can be ascertained that this has taken place, then this fact is confirmatory evidence for the authority of the Word of God. Machen felt that such evidence is admissible, for he wrote: "Christian experience is rightly used when it confirms the documentary evidence."<sup>12</sup> Such instances of God's transforming power can be documented and therefore have a right to a hearing before the bar of investigation concerning the inspiration and authority of the Word of God.

### The Implication of the Evidence

Concerning the importance of the testimony of "fruit," Jesus said:

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. . . . Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.<sup>13</sup>

Since the Word of God apart from human instrumentality is sufficient to bring a person to a saving knowledge of God in Christ, this fact is certainly "good fruit" and consequently is evidence of the "goodness" of the tree, the Word of God. This truth is clearly seen by M'Ilvaine. He stated:

The goodness of a tree cannot be doubted while we know the excellence of its fruit. No more reason have we to question the holy character and divine origin of religion, while its genuine disciples are holy. We may come to an erroneous conclusion by judging erroneously of the fruit; by ascribing effects to causes which did not produce them; by charging upon religion a train of consequences of which it was only the incidental occasion, instead of the natural cause. But these errors are in the application, and independent of the correctness of the test. Whenever you have ascertained the true results of any system of doctrine, you have found a plain and certain expression of its intrinsic character. It is good in proportion as the fruit is good. If its fruit be godly, it must itself be good.<sup>14</sup>

It was the concern of the investigation undertaken in connection with this study to ascertain whether or not such "fruit" could be discovered, fruit which was produced by the Word of God alone.

## THE PRESENTATION OF THE EVIDENCE OF THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD

### The Approach of the Investigation

Having decided upon the value of such an investigation as this in the area of apologetics and evidences, the gathering of material then became the concern of the writer. However,

such information could primarily be found only in areas where the Gospel had not previously penetrated. This necessitated gathering evidence from various mission fields. A word may be in order at this point as to how the evidence was collected.

### Interviews

A series of interviews was obtained with Dr. John T. Dale, Director of the Mexican Indian Mission. The material thus obtained was recorded and later stenographically reproduced. Some of the material thus gained will be presented in this discussion. In addition, many other missionaries were interviewed and much helpful material was thus gained.

### Letters

A letter seeking assistance was sent to Wycliffe Bible Translators. Mr. Harold H. Key, the Acting Director of the Extension Department of the mission forwarded the request to the various Branches of that organization. The information obtained through this means came in answer to the following questions:

- 1) Do you feel it is possible for a person to be brought to a saving knowledge of Christ by reading some portion of the Word of God, apart from any contact with a missionary or local believer?
- 2) If so, can you furnish specific examples of this having taken place? The more specific and complete the answer, the more helpful it will be.
- 3) To what extent did the person grow in the "grace and knowledge" of the Lord Jesus Christ before a contact was established with a believer?
- 4) Do you feel it is necessary for the person thus won to Christ to have a continued contact with a mature believer in order to become established in the faith?

It would be impossible to ascertain the number of hours invested by the missionaries of this organization in reply to these questions, but the material thus gained was most helpful in pursuing this study.

In addition, many helpful letters were received from various missionaries not connected with Wycliffe Bible Translators.

### Appreciation

A word of appreciation is due Dr. and Mrs. John T. Dale of the Mexican Indian Mission, Mr. Harold Key of Wycliffe Bible Translators and many others without whose help the study would have been impossible.

### Testimonies to the Power of the Word

From the four corners of the world came letters in response to the questionnaire. Not one dissenting view was expressed, but rather with varied emphases each responded concerning



his (or her) belief that it was possible for the Word of God alone to be the sole instrument used by the Holy Spirit to bring the hitherto unreached native to a saving knowledge of Christ. From the scores of letters and interviews one excerpt is herewith given as representative of the general response. Dr. Dale stated:

The Bible itself, I am sure, and the power of the Holy Spirit can bring conviction of sin and can, I think, bring a person to accept Christ without any one else being there. I think there are a number of cases where it has been done.<sup>15</sup>

### Illustrations of Conversions Through the Word

The preceding paragraph noted the universal opinion of those responding to the investigation in support of the contention under consideration. However, it is one thing to agree with a basic tenet of theology, and often quite another thing to come up with tangible illustrations of that given doctrine. However, many such instances were discovered. These will be considered in a rapid survey around the world.

#### Mexico

One of the most interesting accounts of the power of the Word came from Mexico. John T. Dale recounted the following:

Don Margarito, an Aztec Indian who lived way back up in the mountains in Mexico, led a very wretched life. He was a typical Indian who drank and was vicious with his own family. He came to Tamazunchale because he heard that there were those there who were selling a book, which he heard was the book of the devil.<sup>16</sup> But his condition was such that he felt that even the devil might have something to offer that might be advantageous to him in his wretched condition. So he came to Tamazunchale and bought a Bible and went back. He could read fairly well. He started reading from Genesis right on through. He read the Bible through in fifteen days and nights. Then he said to his wife, "Now, this book is not the book of the devil for there are too many things that speak of God; I am going to read it through the second time." He did so in a fifteen day period, and then he said: "No, the second time is even better. I'm convinced that this is God's Book; now I'm going to read it through the third time." In the month and a half, he read it through three times. All that time of course his crops needed to be harvested and his sons insisted that he needed to be helping, but he would not turn it loose. At the end of the time he said: "No, this is God's Book. Now we are going to live according to the rules of this book. These things (idols) have to come down, because you see we should not have any images of God of any kind."<sup>17</sup>

Some time following the extensive reading of the Word and the subsequent change in the life of this Aztec Indian, a native believer, Don Ricardo, visited the village and sought to establish

Don Margarito in the things of the Lord. In connection with some discussion of this particular case, Dr. Dale was asked when, in his opinion, God brought life to this Indian's heart. He replied: "My own guess would be that he accepted Christ even before Don Ricardo came there."<sup>18</sup> The change in his life observed both by the family and the entire village would support this contention.

Beginning the first week of January, 1964, it was my privilege to visit the work of the Mexican Indian Mission at Tamazunchale and the surrounding country. While there I met Don Chencho Lara, one of the elders of the church at Tamazunchale. This is the story of the work of the Word in his life as related by Dr. Dale:

He lived down from Tamazunchale a day and a half ride on horseback toward Tampico. He was quite a wealthy land owner, with beautiful river valley country and he was successful. His father was, as he said, as morally straight a man as you would want; he had heard about the Bible, but he had never seen a copy. The son, Don Chencho Lara, being the oldest in the family, took over and he had in the back of his mind his father's desire to see a Bible, but he had never been able to get one. The story was circulated around that the world was coming to an end and that this was to be found in the book, the Bible. When someone came through selling Bibles, he bought one and began reading it. He told me, and his wife confirmed it, that the impression of the Book was such on him that he began to neglect his business, his farm, and way on into the night he would be reading with a little candle and his wife would try to get him to go to bed and he wouldn't. He would read way on into the morning and then during the day would rush back from his business on the farm to continue reading. He said to me that he was just thrilled with the story and he was being fed at the same time.<sup>19</sup>

In this instance the testimony of the man himself confirms the contention that he came to saving faith through the reading of the Word apart from any spoken testimony. He told Dr. Dale: "Not only did it create a hunger and a thirst for the Word, but it was beginning to increase it and to feed me."

### The Philippines

In response to the request for illustrations of the power of the Word, Lester O. Troyer wrote from the Philippines:

I can give one very graphic example of this. A young Balangao tribesman came in contact with me in 1957. At that time I sold him an Ilocano New Testament without having much opportunity to witness to him at all, since I didn't speak his dialect. I met him four years later and he had been saved through the reading of the Word and had won others to the Lord also.<sup>20</sup>

## Cuba

G. Christian Weiss, missionary speaker with the Back to the Bible Broadcast, wrote concerning an instance he had discovered in Cuba which testifies to the power of the Word:

While in Cuba a few years ago I learned of a very wicked man who was converted to Christ and his life completely transformed through reading a New Testament which he had secured in a very strange way. There was no Christian to talk to him about Christ or explain the way of salvation. It was purely through the reading of the New Testament that he found the light. He was an established Christian when he first made contact with other Christian people.<sup>21</sup>

## Ethiopia

Weiss also wrote concerning a personal contact in Ethiopia which illustrates the contention of this investigation. He recounts:

While in Ethiopia a few years ago I came to know a very outstanding case that took place in the mountains. A single man from the Galla tribe in the Chubo area came into Addis Ababa to do some buying. While in the city he was given a New Testament and some books. The man avidly began reading these books. He testified that he discerned that one Book was "The Word of God." The other books he detected were not divine books, so he turned away from them. He continued to read the New Testament and became a true believer in the Lord Jesus and obviously had experienced the miracle of the New Birth by personal faith in the Saviour. He then read the book and proclaimed its contents to his fellow tribesmen. In due time missionaries of the Sudan Interior Mission heard of a group of true believers in this area. They went to the area and found that it was indeed true. Quite a number of people in this area were genuine believers, some of them with very amazing understanding of the Scriptures. But of course on some points they lacked understanding and maturity.

The five illustrations listed above are but representative of close to one hundred which were discovered in connection with this study. These included the countries of India, China, Japan, France, South America and many islands. Space and not interest necessitated the brief selection.

Jesus said: ". . . in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established" (Matt. 18:16). In criminal law today one witness is sufficient to bring a conviction (the exception being that of an accomplice, in which case his testimony alone cannot be used to bring a conviction). In civil law, as for instance in the establishment of legal documents, two or three witnesses are required to conclude the final decision. If the law of the land thus recognizes the validity of the testimony of reliable witnesses, it certainly should be granted that the testimonies listed herein are sufficient to establish the reality of the power of the Word of God, by

itself and apart from any contact with a believer to bring an individual to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. If this is not granted, then the burden of proof rests upon those who thus dispute the evidence herein presented. God's Word has the inherent power to lead a "pure heathen" to a conversion experience.

### The Power of the Word as Seen in Growth and Maturity

The questions asked in connection with this investigation dealt not only with the power of the Word to lead to conversion, but also the extent to which the Word alone is capable of causing a definite growth in grace. Is it possible for the Word of God alone to cause the individual who has been converted by its power to grow in the "grace and knowledge" of the Lord Jesus Christ? Most of those who replied to the questionnaire definitely felt that it was possible for the new convert to grow in the Lord solely through reading the Word. Troyer is a good illustration of this. He wrote:

If the Word of God is translated into the dialect of people who have no large legacy of other literature, I think it is possible for persons to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, in direct relation to their own spiritual hunger and obedience to the Holy Spirit's leadings.<sup>22</sup>

Though a given area of growth in grace may be basically an intangible thing, that growth will be seen in a changed life. This was manifest in the early church and certainly should be in this day. If there is this growth on the part of the person converted on the basis of the conditions set forth in this study, then that growth should be observable by the villagers in whose village the individual lives. In connection with the illustration of the Mexican Indian Don Margarito it was noted that a definite change did take place in his life before a native believer appeared upon the scene. Concerning this, Dale commented: "They had seen something that was a definite asset in the change, both in the home and in the general life. . . . The change that had taken place in Don Margarito was sufficient to convince them that this was worthwhile."<sup>23</sup>

In connection with this study, the question was asked: "Do you feel it is necessary for the person thus won to Christ to have a continued contact with a mature believer in order to become established in the faith?" The answers received reveal a general agreement that contact with a mature believer is God's normal plan for growth unto maturity. However, if the mature believer is not available and the Word is, God is not stymied in His desire for growth unto maturity. The answer of Rowan illustrates this respect for the authority of the Word and its ability to do the work in the life of the new believer. He wrote:

There is no reason for saying it is necessary to have a continued contact with mature Christians after conversion, even though the vast majority of cases have happened this way. Again, the Scriptures contain all that is necessary for "doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). The mature Christian's conduct is completely dependent upon his continuing to receive instruction from the Word; the same should apply for the novice, whether he receives the instruction only by

reading the Word or being helped to see the instruction from the Word by someone else. The important factor is that he receive this instruction, directly from the Bible itself, whether someone else helps him with it or not.<sup>24</sup>

The many illustrations obtained through this investigation should be sufficient to clearly establish the fact that the Word of God completely separated from any spoken witness is all that is needed to bring a lost sinner to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. Further, the Word can also bring about a definite growth in the grace of the Lord unto at least a certain measure of maturity. This fact carries with it a definite implication.

### THE APPLICATION OF THE EVIDENCE TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE WORD OF GOD

#### The Confrontation by the Evidence

##### Its Reality

The foregoing instances clearly establish the fact that through the reading of the Bible men have been changed. The number of instances with so many similar aspects in each removes any possibility of explaining this change on the basis of coincidence. It, therefore, should be conceded that the Bible has the power to move men. This change of life is to be explained on the basis of the miracle of salvation. The reader of the Bible, realizing his need and God's answer to it in the person of God's Son, Jesus Christ, accepts that salvation. This in turn results in obedience to the Word of God in the various areas of life.

##### Its Relevance

Once this change is wrought in one individual's life, then his neighbors see that the Book which he has been reading has real relevance to life. In connection with this aspect of the Word of God in the mission field, Dale said:

It is attractive because it is seen to be relevant, more than as if the missionary were to say, "This is it!" We could say that this is God's Word, but they would reply: "What God and what do you mean by Word?" The question is, is it relevant? Just to say God's Word, is not sufficient unless they understand what you mean by it. What evidence do they have in a life that it is relevant? . . . When those people saw Don Margarito without images and the change in his conduct, they immediately said, "Bueno," ("good"). They recognized that it must be relevant, worthwhile, because of what they saw in Don Margarito.<sup>25</sup>

Hence, there is relevance in the Word of God. How does one explain this?

#### The Explanation of this Confrontation

One of the basic laws of reasoning is that every effect must have an adequate cause. Since

the Bible is the cause of the given effect, then how do you explain the cause? There are some today who would attempt to explain it on the ground of purely human reasoning and contend for human origination. But is not this insisting on an even greater miracle than that of divine origination? Has one thus really explained the cause? This is the contention of Horne, when he writes:

A belief in the Christian Scriptures is, indeed, a belief in the reality of past miracles, to confirm a religion worthy of God and useful to man. Such a belief implies no absurdity, or contradiction to any truth or fact. But by rejecting the Gospel, persons are compelled to maintain, in opposition to positive credible testimony, that extensive important events have taken place without an adequate cause.<sup>26</sup>

Therefore, the most logical explanation of the evidence is that the Bible is a God-given book. Gray maintains this to be the case. He states: "Such a book can only be a transcript of the divine mind, a revelation of the divine purpose."<sup>27</sup> Once it is granted that the Bible is a God-given book, then it naturally follows that it is God's truth. Since the Bible is God's truth, then it should be concluded that the Bible must be God in communication. Conservative Christianity is unflinchingly committed to this thesis. Nida, in his excellent work on the communication of the Christian faith, declared:

The New Testament comes, rather, as the communication of a new way of life. Thus the impact of its dissemination is highly significant in any thoughtful study of the principles and procedures of communication.<sup>28</sup>

### The Implications of this Explanation

From the preceding considerations there are certain implications which should be brought sharply into focus.

#### The Existence of Authority

If it is recognized that Scripture is God in communication with men, then God is the author of that Scripture. When this is posited it immediately follows that Scripture is authoritative. Murray observes this: "It is divine authorship, therefore, that invests Scripture with authority."<sup>29</sup> Experience brought about through the power of the Word of God testifies to the authority of that Word, but that experience is not the authority. The heathen thus converted turned to the Word for the authority of his life. This was often discovered, as for instance in the life of Don Margarito who said: "Now we are going to live according to the rules of this Book." The apprehension of this authority by the heathen is of evidential value, not in the establishment of the authority of the Word, but toward the recognition of the authority already established by God Himself in His Word.

#### The Insistence on Inspiration

Another implication of the evidence gathered in this investigation concerns the doctrine of

verbal-plenary inspiration. This view of inspiration stands or falls with the correct view of authority. Having insisted on the reality of an objective authority which is the Word of God, the logic involved argues back to the recognition of the reality of verbal-plenary inspiration. Witmer traces this logic as follows:

Only with the acceptance of the doctrine of verbal-plenary inspiration of Scripture is the validity of the authority of the Bible safeguarded from deterioration, because only by this doctrine is the existence of the totality of Scripture as "God-breathed," the Word of God, assured. The logic involved is simple. To the extent verbal-plenary inspiration is modified, infallibility is removed. To the extent infallibility is removed, human error is admitted. Since error cannot be ascribed to God, therefore, to the extent that human error is admitted, divine authorship is removed and purely human authorship remains, the authority of God departs. When the authority of God can no longer be ascribed to all the Bible, then some principle for determining which parts have the authority of God and which do not must be adopted. And when the adoption of such a principle is necessary, the external, objective authority of the Bible--the principle of sola Scriptura--is gone, and subjectivism reigns supreme.<sup>30</sup>

### The Accusation of Bibliolatry

Upon the acceptance of the doctrine of verbal-plenary inspiration, the conservative scholar is often accused of Bibliolatry, a worshipping of the Bible rather than the Person of the Bible. But this is not true for the only revelation which man has of Jesus Christ is in the Word of God. If this Word is not authoritative, not trustworthy, then neither is the revelation it gives of Jesus Christ trustworthy. Of course Christ is the final authority, but it is not possible to divorce Him from the pages of the Word and grant to Him an authority which is not inherent in His Word. Thomas succinctly stated this. He wrote: "The Lord Jesus Christ is our supreme authority, and we accept the Bible because it enshrines and embodies that authority. . . . what we want is the best available form of Christ's revelation, and we believe we get this in the Bible and not in any other way."<sup>31</sup>

In the Upper-Room discourse, Jesus said: "I am . . . the truth" (John 14:6). A few hours later in the great high-priestly prayer, He said: "I have given them Thy word . . . Thy word is truth" (John 17:14, 17). Therefore, Jesus Christ Himself equated the authority of the Word with His own authority. This is the very same thing to which the instances in this investigation give testimony. These "pure heathen" have equated the authority of the Person of the Word with the Word itself and manifested this through an acceptance of His Person and a changed life based on the Word of God.

### The Reception of This Reality

There are many well-educated people today who do not accept this position. Why is this? The answer to this problem is found in the Word of God itself. It declares: ". . . the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel

of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4:4). Therefore, the need is not for a change in the evidence, but rather for a change in the observer. Man will not himself come to a realization of the light, and hence its authority, by his reason alone. Neither is it possible for one man, a believer, by his reason to convince another, an unbeliever, of the light and its authority.

However, that which is impossible for man is possible with God. God has provided a means by which man can come to the light and know it as light. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Word is authoritative in itself, but it is the Holy Spirit who brings this realization to the heart of man. He uses the Word of God to bring conviction to the heart (John 16:7-11). Then the Spirit brings about the work of regeneration by which the New Birth takes place as the individual believes the message. By no other means can man come to the realization of the authority of the Word of God. From beginning to end it is a supernatural work of God. Hence, God receives the glory.

### CONCLUSION

It is hoped that the evidence presented in this study will confirm the conclusion that the Bible is the revelation of God, and therefore possesses an inherent authority. It is recognized that this conviction comes by the work of the Spirit of God. Evidences alone are not the final answer, but this does not mean that God may not be pleased to use them to bring us to the knowledge of His will as they authenticate the authority of His Word.

There are certain basic results which should stem from such a study as this. First, is that of evangelism, getting out the Gospel. The authority of the Word of God insists on evangelism. Jesus said: "All power (exousia, authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore . . ." (Matt. 28:18-19). An acceptance of its message into the heart and life insists that this message be shared. There are many facets to the gem of evangelism, but one that shines brightly from this consideration is the necessity of getting out the Word. Man should not be as concerned about defending the Book as he is about spreading it and its message. Lloyd-Jones forcefully brought this to the forefront, when he wrote:

The authority of the Scriptures is not a matter to be defended, so much as to be asserted. I address this remark particularly to Conservative Evangelicals. . . . We need to remind ourselves frequently that it is the preaching and exposition of the Bible that really establish its truth and authority.<sup>32</sup>

This is not to contend for the distribution of God's Word alone without the spoken testimony of saving grace in the life, but it certainly should strengthen the faith of the believer in the Word of God and should remind him that God's Word does have the power to lead the sinner to conversion apart from human aid. Therefore, where he may not go, this inspired, infallible, authoritative Book can go and bring some needy sinner to Christ.

Finally, since the Word of God carries such inherent power and infallible authority, each Christian should be zealously concerned about the translation and distribution of God's Word,



and each scholar who attempts to do the tedious work of translation into the language of those into whose hands, guided by divine providence, it may fall, should be prayerfully dependent on the indwelling Spirit of God.

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# THE ACTS OF GOD

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One of the problems in contemporary theology is the question of theological meaning. The understanding of the meaning of theological terminology does not follow directly from the use of the terminology. In much of the current theological literature the special terms of theology are used in other than their literal and historical sense. In the literal and historical sense the term as used provides a univocal meaning, i.e. a meaning which is certain and unmistakable. The contemporary "Biblical Theology" movement has maintained the theological terms, but uses them in an analogical sense, i.e. the term has a symbolical sense which conveys meaning by resemblance or comparison. Two basic criticisms may be directed against this new tendency. In the first place, the use of historical terms in an analogical sense is deceptive because the theological assertion may have an appearance of orthodoxy without being really orthodox. In the second place, the adoption of analogical usages of language is liable to produce ambiguous, unintelligible, and equivocal assertions. We will illustrate the seriousness of this theological problem in relation to one of the most important theological concepts in Biblical revelation.

The Scriptures portray the truth that God is One who acts in the affairs of men, and specially in the history of His chosen people Israel, and in the Church of Jesus Christ. The specific question to be answered is simply, "What do we mean by the acts of God?" By the use of the word "act" or "activity" we normally mean that some work, deed, or event takes place in some location and at some time. This definition would constitute what might be called a literal sense of the term, and the univocal meaning of the term may be demonstrated by a comparative investigation of its meaning in dictionaries. In applying this literal sense to the Biblical text the evangelical theologian would understand that God acted in time and space so that the results of His activity were observable, or at least, potentially observable. The acting and speaking of God are, therefore, to be conceived as falling into an historical context.

Liberalism regarded this orthodox representation of God's activity as a primitive pre-scientific form of religion which should be modernized. The concept of the world and history adopted by Liberals was that of a locked causal continuum of space-time experience. In such a view there was no place for outside intervention, but only for the operation of natural law and inter-relating natural causes. However, Liberalism did not repudiate the concept of the activity of God, but redefined it to mean "the continual, creative, immanent activity of God, an activity which worked through the natural order."<sup>1</sup> The activity of God was, in this formulation, only the whole total of the world's natural processes, and the immanent God of Liberal-

ism had no transcendent control over natural law or historical process. Nevertheless, the language used to describe the activity of God was univocal, even though it did not agree with the Biblical revelation.

Neo-orthodoxy reacted against the liberal reduction of God's activity to an immanent operation within the space-time continuum. This new trend in contemporary theology places an emphasis upon the transcendence of God, i.e., God is designated as the wholly-Other. God is, therefore, removed from the world, its law, and processes. Along with this concept of God's transcendence the scientific view of the world is maintained in agreement with the liberal position. However, this attempt to harmonize divine transcendence and the modern scientific world view produces some basic problems in relation to the activity of God. In continuing to stress the activity of God the "Biblical Theology" movement is faced with the question as to the nature of God's activity--"What actually happened in the events of Biblical history?" In relation to the Exodus, Wright states that "outwardly the event was indistinguishable from other events."<sup>2</sup> The event is affirmed to have had a natural explanation on the objective side of the event because the modern scientific theologian must abide within the framework of scientific explanations. However, in such an explanation the question intrudes itself--"How then did God act?" The response to this implied question involves the analogical usage of language, i.e. "God acts" means something other than the literal sense of the term, and the Biblical portrayal of the event would demand. What the concept does mean "is extremely elusive to discover,"<sup>3</sup> and no proper interpretation is given other than the fact that the act cannot be a divine intervention or a miraculous event. "In other words, they continue to use the Biblical and orthodox theological language of divine activity and speech, but they have dispensed with the wonders and voices that gave univocal meaning, and thus content, to the theological words 'God acts' and 'God speaks.'"<sup>4</sup>

These options are not the only ones which are available to explain the nature of the acts of God, or to show the relationship of a transcendent God to the natural operations of the world. The evangelical believer does not need to adopt a prescientific world view in order to maintain the Biblical concept of divine activity and miracle. The evangelical answer is often misrepresented as a denial of the reign of causal law in the phenomenal realm of space and time. However, there is no dichotomy between the Biblical and the scientific if the nature of both categories is understood, and if the developing state of theological and scientific knowledge is properly affirmed. An attempt will therefore be made to express a Christian interpretation of the acts of God in five areas in which Biblical revelation affirms the fact of divine activity--creation, preservation, history, miracle, and prayer.

## CREATION

The first of the mighty acts of God, the creation, makes all others possible and understandable. The Scriptures begin with the assertion of the activity of God--"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). In the literal understanding of the text God is to be understood as an eternal Being who brought all things into existence which constitute what we know as the universe and its inhabitants. God is conceived to have an originaive relationship to this universe so that its laws and processes are specifically ascribed to the creative

wisdom and will of God. The Christian does not, therefore, fear the study of nature for to him that which is discerned and discovered can be nothing less than the natural processes which God brought into existence. Conflict arises in the mind of man when he allows his systems of knowledge to be absolutized into unchangeable dogma. The perception of harmony in science and Scripture is a developing pursuit which has the promise of ultimate satisfaction.

Our Christian faith has an explanation of reality which is uniquely different from all other systems. Reality embraces God and His creation in the relation of Creator and created. The world contains within itself no explanation or cause for its own existence. Whatever is investigated in this world must be understood to be contingent, i.e., ultimately dependent upon something else. Nothing within the world as we find it is ultimate, but everything has connections with prior causes. Scientific research attempts to discover the pattern of these contingent causes so as to lay down patterns of action for practical ends. Scientific explanations are subject to modification or rejection in the light of each new observation of relevant data. More and more scientists are coming to realize that it is impossible to discover the real truth of nature. "It is difficult to conceive anything more scientifically bigoted than to postulate that all possible experience conforms to the same type as that with which we are already familiar."<sup>5</sup> "What twentieth-century science has come to is the view that science will never, can never describe how nature works. Science does not aim at truth; it aims at invention."<sup>6</sup> This is precisely what the Christian means in affirming that the meaning or truth of nature cannot be discovered within the natural process. God alone as the originaive cause embraces the meaning of that which He created, and has expressed the basic foundation of this meaning in the sacred Scriptures (Psa. 19:1-6, Heb. 11:3, Rev. 4:11).

The modern evolutionary hypothesis would not allow room for the activity of God as previously defined, and therefore stands opposed to the Biblical concept of creation. Christians are not opposed to a concept of evolution. There are many legitimate senses in which the concept may be used to designate a process of development which is generally recognized in many areas such as horticulture, animal breeding, and even society itself. In this sense evolution is a term which designates the developing process in realizing the full potential of the original kinds of life created by God. However, the use of evolution as a quasi-answer to the problem of the origin of matter and life is certainly unbiblical, and, according to some competent authorities, unscientific. "Of all the laws of nature, perhaps the most fundamental is concerned with nature's time sense. . . . Events occur in such a way that order disappears, or at best remains unchanged. . . . All the laws of nature which are concerned with how things happen are restatements, in a limited field, of the law of morpholysis."<sup>7</sup> This law really means that the energy of the universe was wound up at the beginning, and has subsequently become less and less available for useful work--a fact that does not make creation appear to be fantastic or unscientific. The Biblical record establishes the proper guide lines for modern science in its affirmation that God is active in the creation of matter and life, and in the establishment of the basic forms and laws related to matter and life.

## PRESERVATION

In the definition of the relationship of God to His creation our Christian faith places along-

side the work of creation the work of preservation. Therefore, Christians affirm that God is in a continuing relationship to the world which He created. Over against this item of our faith is the concept of the world as a self-sustaining and self-continuing mechanism. Naturalism states that the universe continues, and is sustained by inherent natural forces. Deists believe that God imparted to matter certain properties, and placed it under certain invariable laws. Nevertheless, from this point of creation God has no direct or continuing relationship to the universe. Both of these theories are antagonistic to our Christian faith in that they impute the attribute of self-subsistence to the creation.

The acts of God in preservation mean that all created things are utterly dependent upon God for their continuance and sustenance. "For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things" (Rom. 11:36). Creation as such does not possess the attributes of self-existence or self-perpetuation. No nature, substance, or being can exist apart from God through any inherent power of being. God preserves in existence the entire creation with all its laws, properties, powers, and processes (Col. 1:17, Heb. 1:3, Acts 17:28). "This concept opposes every claimant to absoluteness in this world--gods and idols, and any who would autonomously and sovereignly pretend to a self-existence. The doctrine dethrones all creaturely self-sufficiency, all assumptive independence."<sup>8</sup> God is the continuous and preserving cause of the continued existence of all things.

The acts of God in preservation mean that God operates upon, in and with the creation in accordance with the original design of creation. Preserving acts of God are never to be considered as contrary to creating acts, and so God does not violate in preservation what He has accomplished in creation. Divine preservation is more than a mere conservation of properties, for preservation is to be regarded as a process which unfolds the full potentials of the original created forms. God acts in preservation in order to enable it to achieve the true purpose of its being, and to satisfy the varied needs of all His created life-forms. The Scriptures illustrate abundantly this dynamic activity of God whereby His creation unfolds its potentiality, and fulfills its place in the divine purpose (Psa. 145:16-17, Job 38, Psa. 104). Men of God saw in this activity of God a convincing demonstration of His invincible majesty (Job 37:5, 15; 36:29; Psa. 65:9, 11).

The acts of God in preservation mean that God has a continuing purpose in relation to the present world. The question concerning the purpose of God's preservation gains point in view of the seriousness of the fall--"Why does God desire to sustain the world in light of the fall of man?" In the Scriptures there is no sustenance in itself for the work of preservation is always bound to the purpose of God in redemption. The curse upon Adam and his environment appeared to involve the destruction of creation, but the gracious protoevangelium promised the perpetuation of life until the coming of the seed (Gen. 3:14-19, 3:15). The threatened judgment in the days of Noah appeared to put the continuation of human life in jeopardy. However, through grace the family of Noah was preserved, and after the deluge, God instituted His everlasting covenant with Noah, his seed, and every living creature upon the earth (Gen. 8:21-22, 9:10-16). Grace continued the created life-forms after the infliction of divine judgment. The acts of God in redemption stand therefore in an inseparable relationship to the grace and mercy of God, and to His purpose of redemption.

The acts of God in preservation mean that the activity of God and His characteristics may be seen in the natural order. Since God acts to preserve His universe, man is confronted by the evidence of His acts and the character of His acting (Psa. 19:1-6, Rom. 1:20-21, Psa. 104:24). This general revelation of God in His actions confronts all men with the evidence of God's existence and activity. The truth of this confrontation man refuses to admit, but in rejecting the revealed truth he demonstrates his own blame and guilt (Rom. 1:20-24, Acts 14:15-17). In the extension of history and natural life can be heard the call of the God who preserves. In addition to these external revelations of God's existence and activity man also is confronted by an internal witness of God's existence and continuing activity (Rom. 1:19 - "manifest in them"; Rom. 2:14-15, 1:32). Men are, therefore, not only confronted with the evidence of an omnipotent God, but also with the presence of a moral God. God rules and directs not only the external development of things, but works in the deepest thoughts and motives of every man.

The acts of God in preservation mean that the universe and natural life are not overcome by the total destructive potential of evil. The preserving activity of God explains the presence of some law and order in the natural universe (Gen. 8:21-22, Psa. 74:17, Jer. 33:20, 25); the presence of some small remnant of natural light through which man retains some knowledge of God (Rom. 1:21-25, Acts 17:28); the presence of some traces of an ability to distinguish between good and evil (Rom. 1:32, 2:14-15). This preserving activity of God does not lessen the guilt and responsibility of man. Nevertheless, in His creating and preserving acts God does manifest His grace in the restraining of the emergence of total evil so that natural life and history do still show some of the excellencies and orders of His original work. The Christian may, therefore, find value in the natural order and natural life. All that possesses value in the universe and natural life arises out of this dynamic activity of God. Our Christian faith does not turn away from the creation and its life-forms. Platonic philosophy advocated an escape from the realm of matter in order to inhabit the realm of pure spirit. The Christian recognizes that the universe bears the marks of corruption, but delights in the universe and natural life as bearing the evidence of God's glorious activity, and looks forward to its total redemption (Rom. 8:20-23).

## HISTORY

The twentieth century has witnessed mounting interest in the meaning of history, but with the development of scientific historiography has come the pessimistic conclusion that we cannot know if there is a plan for history, nor even if there is, whether it can be realized. The study of history involves more than a recording of past events for the historian looks for significant human happenings, and the pattern of events that has an enduring meaning. Many different philosophies of history have emerged in the attempt to achieve meaning in the mass of historical data. Voltaire and Condorcet thought that history was the record of man's progress from ignorance and superstition to the clear day of rationality through which he would eventually reach perfection. Karl Marx expounded an economic, materialistic interpretation of history which was to issue in the classless society and communistic utopia. Arnold Toynbee has attempted to discover the patterns of history in the study of civilizations and cultures instead

of national groups. Over against these options the doctrine of providence means that the Christian has an interpretation which makes history coherent and complete.

The sovereign God confers meaning and purpose on history. The course of history is not to be considered as a meaningless and purposeless jumble of unrelated events. The meaning and purpose of history are intimately related to the divine plan and purpose of God. "God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established."<sup>9</sup> The Scriptures also declare the fact of divine purpose as the ultimate meaning of history (Acts 17:24-31, Heb. 1:1-3, Eph. 1:3-12).

The sovereign God originates and directs the course of history. God is the author of history because He is the Creator of man, and of the world in which man was to live and to fulfil His divinely assigned purposes. The God of Christianity does not deal with a world that evolved by chance, nor does He assume sovereignty over creatures who came into being by some mysterious process. God is the author of the life of man, of the world, and its creatures. In His execution of the decrees of providence the divine author expresses and accomplishes the purposes inherent in the act of creation. The decrees of God "move the stream of events irresistibly toward that goal which is neither visible to human reason, nor susceptible to human manipulations and devices, for it lies beyond the scope of human, political, social, and economic planners."<sup>10</sup>

The sovereign God centers all history in the decisive event of the incarnation. The incarnation is the focal point of history, and the great watershed of prophetic revelation. Paul makes one of the most comprehensive statements of all Scripture concerning God's control and evaluation of the historical process when he states clearly that the fulness of time is the birth of Jesus Christ (Gal. 4:6). Ancient history was directed toward this great event, and all subsequent events have their bearing from this great division point. The birth of Jesus Christ and His redemptive work may be considered to be the proper goals of the historical sequence of the ancient times whereas the proclamation of Jesus Christ and the establishment of His kingdom are the divinely appointed goals for this age.

The sovereign God will most certainly accomplish His divine purpose in history. Man was placed under a mandate from God to discover the meaning of his own existence on earth, and to realize the true purpose of life in the will of God (Gen. 1:26-31). Even though man sinned against the will of God introducing into the world a new element which produced tragic consequences, history did not, thereby, lose its meaning or its divinely intended purposes. Sin could in no way thwart the realization of the purposes of God. "Where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly" (Rom. 5:20). History as a result became the scene of the revelation of God's righteous judgments against sin, and of His gracious offer of salvation in Christ. Although the providential activity of God is unknown to sinful man, and comprehended dimly by the believer, God is active in the historical processes. The establishment of a kingdom in which the will of God will be done will be the outcome of the historical activity of a sovereign God.



## MIRACLES

The concept of miracle is another topic which is deeply involved in the acts of God for the Scriptures present abundant information as to this divine activity throughout the history of redemption (Acts 2:22, Heb. 2:4). "The concept of miracle has been attacked historically (e.g. Renan), scientifically (e.g. Huxley), and theologically (Sabatier)."<sup>11</sup> These attacks have usually arisen out of Hume's famous assertion that a miracle "is a violation of the laws of nature."<sup>12</sup> However, in opposition to these apparently plausible attacks the Biblical world-view does not consider the concept of miracle as an embarrassing anomaly, but as an inevitable description of the way in which God works. "Granted the postulates of creation, providence, sin, and salvation, miracle becomes a veritable necessity, a necessity of grace."<sup>13</sup>

Miracle does not refer to an event which is contrary to nature. The most discussed problem in the matter of miracles has centered about this idea of miracles as being contra naturam. This concept arises out of an understanding of nature as a self-enclosed, self-explanatory continuum going of its own accord with all events causally interlocked backwards and forwards. The formulation of Augustine on this point of contention has been regarded as a proper guide to be followed by the Christian. "For we say that all portents are contrary to nature, but they are not so. For how is that contrary to nature which happens by the will of God, since the will of so mighty a Creator is certainly the nature of each created things? A portent, therefore, happens not contrary to nature, but contrary to what we know as nature. . . . There is, however, no impropriety in saying that God does a thing contrary to what we know of nature. For we give the name nature to the usual common course of nature; and whatever God does contrary to this, we call a prodigy, or a miracle. But against the supreme law of nature, which is beyond the knowledge both of the ungodly and of weak believers, God never acts, any more than He acts against Himself."<sup>14</sup>

Miracle must be understood as an activity of God which is against sin. Nature now exists in a state of abnormality because of the fact of sin (Gen. 3:17-18). The order of nature is now affected by gross disorder, and the entire creation including man no longer is in perfect harmony with the divine purpose. However, God does not allow disorder and disharmony to rule in His creation, but rather in a work of regeneration seeks to remove the abnormality of sin to bring His creation to its appointed end. "That abnormal mode of the divine working called miracle is therefore not a meaningless, haphazard marvel. It is rather that soteriologically motivated deviation from his normal mode of working which the undoing of sin's abnormality requires."<sup>15</sup> Miracle is "the overcoming, interpenetrating working of the Divine energy by which God breaks all opposition, and in the face of disorder brings His cosmos to realize that end which was determined upon in His counsel."<sup>16</sup>

The nature and number of miracles are determined by the divine purpose in its historical outworking. Miracles are found to congregate particularly in the critical periods of the history of God's people--the Exodus, the days of Elijah and Elisha, the life of Daniel, the life of Jesus, and the times of the apostles. Miracles call attention to the reality and power of God as He acts redemptively to separate His people from sin and idolatry, and to achieve His purpose in a holy and redeemed people. In these times of crisis the eyes of the people are fixed upon the

absoluteness of His redeeming power. "It is not that in miracles a greater power is revealed than is present in the ordinary course of things. Everything that God brings into being is a work of His singular omnipotence. But in miracles God takes another way than that which had come to be expected of Him in the usual course of events."<sup>17</sup> Miracles are not the intersection of the supernatural with a self-contained natural life, but with the life of sin under the influence of demons, and powers, and unbelief. Scriptures do not indicate any line that can be drawn to mark off a boundary between the time of miracles and the time of the absence of miracles. The presence and absence of miracles depend ultimately upon the purpose of God in its historical outworking. During this age until the return of Christ God has sent His Spirit to work in and by the church through the instrumentality of the written word and the ordinances, but "he who thinks that he can say with certainty that miracles can no longer occur may seriously ask himself whether he thinks in terms of God's power over the world or from a secret capitulation to determinism."<sup>18</sup>

Miracle as the overcoming of the abnormality and disorder of sin is not to be considered as an isolated intermittent divine activity. The miracle points forward to the entire metamorphosis which awaits the creation (Matt. 19:28, Rom. 8:18-23). This divine activity will show itself in the radical renewal of the life of man, and in the complete transformation of nature, removing the marks of corruption which man and nature bear because of the consequences of sin. Miracles as they occur in the past are a token or foreshadow of the redemptive activity of God in the consummation of His purpose. The individual tokens of miracle which evidenced the presence of the Messiah in His first advent demonstrate in a partial way that which will be universal in the age to come (Matt. 11:3-6). In miracle God acts to demonstrate His power over the abnormality of sin and disorder, and to foreshadow the time when His redemptive power will have inaugurated "new heavens and a new earth" (Isa. 65:17).

### PRAYER

Prayer is one of the most commonly employed activities of the Christian. However, from the standpoint of the question of providence, does God actually hear and answer prayer? Because God is infinite in all His attributes, how can insignificant man hope to force his will upon the will of God? Another objection to prayer is that God has set the world to moving and all things therein according to certain and fixed natural laws. Again, if God is to be considered as changeless and immutable, how can prayer affect His predetermined purpose? Is it, therefore, valid to speak of God acting to answer the prayers of His people, or is prayer merely a psychological mechanism which affects us but leaves the world as it is? From a practical point of view the exercise of prayer is the heart of the question which involves the providential acts of God.

Prayer is personal communion in the context of the Father-child relationship. Prayer can exist only upon the grounds of redemptive grace as the formerly rebellious man comes into the Father-child relationship. The infinity of God in all His attributes does not rule out the possibility of prayer for it is the nature of God to be infinitely merciful and gracious to those who are His own spiritual sons (Psa. 103:8-14, 8:3-4). God is to be understood as interested in the legitimate needs of man, and wills in His redemptive plan to fulfil the needs which man

possesses because of the activity and consequences of sin (Phil. 4:19, Matt. 6:31-33). God's promises to the believer indicate the nature of His gracious will, and provide an opportunity for the believer to request from God that which will be to his spiritual advantage and according to God's will (Jas. 4:2). Since the purpose of God is redemptively orientated, the believer may not expect to receive when the request is for that which will not further the redemptive activity of God (Jas. 4:3). Insignificant man does not force His will upon God for God desires that man should seek Him and His spiritual benefits.

Prayer is an exercise of the soul made possible by the new order which is breaking in upon the world of nature. The objection that prayer to God forces Him to go contrary to the laws of nature arises out of a false assumption concerning the nature of the universe. Nature is not a self-contained mechanism which exists apart from God so that God would have to tamper with the mechanism in order to answer prayer. God actively works in the natural order, and so natural law is simply a description of the manner in which God acts. However, God also is working redemptively in order to overcome the abnormality and disorder of sin which exists in our natural universe, and which apart from the preserving activity of God would lead to complete chaos and disorder. However, a new redemptive order is breaking in upon this world overcoming the effects of sin, and bringing to man and the universe the redemptive blessings of this new order. The believer who prays for inner strength and renewal is praying that he may receive deliverance from that order which sin has introduced, and an experience of the power and energy of the new life (Isa. 40:29). The believer who prays for physical health and healing seeks deliverance from the disabling effects of sin, and an experience of physical health and strength which are to be associated with the new order (Matt. 20:29-34, 11:2-6). The believer must always be mindful that physical redemption is never complete in this life (Rom. 8:23, Phil. 3:20-21). The believer who prays for deliverance from natural calamities desires to know the experience of safety which is the redemptive blessing set over against the violent disorder of our present economy (Matt. 8:23-27). The prayer must always be delivered with the consciousness that the restoration of nature is not total in this age (Matt. 19:28).

Prayer is an orientation to the will of God which can alone produce meaning and satisfaction in life. God is immutable because His will embraces the only true meaning of life. Everything other than the will of God belongs to the realm of the demonic and the Satanic. To suggest that prayer causes God to change His mind is to misunderstand the nature and function of prayer. Prayer is an expression of insufficiency and dissatisfaction arising from the heart of a creature who has no means at his disposal. In prayer we orientate our life to the will of God in order that we may receive the sufficiency and satisfaction which His will can provide. Requests arising out of self-will cannot be answered because they are destructive to life and well-being.

The acts of God must, therefore, be affirmed in a univocal sense since the Scriptures abundantly testify to the fact of God's activity in the universe which He created, and in the community of faith which He calls unto Himself. The Christian faith does not understand these acts in any analogical sense, but confesses that God did and does act in keeping with the literal and historical sense of that term. God is not merely the name for the natural processes of the

world and of life for He is the originative and the transcendent cause of all created reality, and maintains His existence above that creation which He now sustains. On the other hand, the maintenance of God's transcendence does not in any way necessitate that His activity in the world should be denied because of the structures of scientific theory. The acts of God are discovered in the scientific quest even as they are revealed in His special redemptive purposes in the world of which He is the Creator. "All thy works shall give thanks unto thee, O Jehovah; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glory of the majesty of his kingdom" (Psa. 145:10-12).

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## BOOK REVIEWS

SLAVERY, SEGREGATION AND SCRIPTURE. By James O. Buswell, III. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1964. 101 pages.

In spite of its small size, this is undoubtedly one of the most significant and timely books to be published in recent months. For too long the voice of evangelicals has been still or ambiguous on the question of race, when it has not been actively aligned with the forces of racism. It is high time such a book as this, coming from an evangelical, a Bible student, and a competent anthropologist, should appear to begin to set the record straight.

The most effective part of the book is that in which Buswell draws a parallel between the Southern apologetic for slavery before the Civil War and the present apologetic for racial segregation. By extensive quotations from the works of apologists in both causes, the author permits them to furnish devastating proof of their essential identity. In principle and in expression, the two apologetics are virtually interchangeable. One has only to make minor alterations of vocabulary to make it impossible to distinguish them. Both cases are shakily based on the same misapplied Biblical passages; both are based also on a supposed inferiority of the Negro race.

In fact, this book is so good that it is a shame it is not better. In the chapters where he examines the Bible and the scientific evidence, Buswell almost seems to pull his punches. He simply fails to make full use of the strength of his position. Especially in

his refutation of Claude Putnam et al., he too often fails to spell out any of the extensive case from genetics and physical anthropology to which he alludes, thus giving an altogether false impression that he is simply pitting his word against that of the defenders of racism. One can understand a desire to be brief and simple, but it surely would not have made this small work too bulky to specify at least some of the extensive evidence at the author's disposal.

In short, this is an excellent beginning, and all readers of this journal should read it while awaiting the more complete treatment of this vital issue which Professor Buswell is so eminently qualified to provide. And in any case, the appearance of this book ought to make it clear that one does not have to be a racist in order to be true to the Bible--quite the contrary.

CHARLES R. TABER  
Hartford Seminary Foundation

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS AND TO THE THESSALONIANS. CALVIN'S COMMENTARIES. Trans. Ross Mackenzie. Eds. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, reprinted 1961. 433 pp., \$6.00.

This is the eighth volume of the new translation into the modern English of Calvin's Commentaries on the New Testament. The previous edition of this commentary was a reprint of John Owen's translation of 1849. In his translation Ross Mackenzie desires to

preserve Calvin's ideas, images and exposition. While there are several general changes in this work, Mr. Mackenzie will receive the greatest commendation for casting Calvin's message in up-to-date English. Words of the former translation such as "impiety," "avarice" and "glorying" are replaced by "ungodliness," "covetousness" and "boasting." Of course, Calvin's work cannot be translated into the vocabulary of a primary student. Therefore, some readers may want a little help on the dictionary definitions of words such as "surreptitiously," "effrontery," "temerity," and "fastidiousness."

The translator has improved sentence structures, broken up lengthy sentences, and reduced the number of negative statements. The whole work has only twelve footnotes and these are of the briefest nature. The King James text is removed from this work as well as the Latin version. Owen's translation of the Scriptures formerly at the end of the book is also deleted. Mackenzie's personal translation is inserted where the King James version formerly stood. The verses of his translation are not individually numbered. The Indexes to Greek and Hebrew Words are gone. The Index of Scripture References is retained, but revised with the new translation. Latin words are introduced at a limited rate into the text (e.g., p. 400). Words without strong attestation in the manuscripts are dropped from the verse translation, but mentioned in the general text (e.g., "fellow-worker," 1 Thess. 3:2, p. 352; cf. "from God . . .," p. 333).

The linen binding of the new work will probably give as many years of service as the old buckram. But some doubt might be expressed as to the color and strength of the paper. Pages 417-420 of the reviewer's copy are not sewed into the binding and the type on these pages is crooked. Some readers will miss the extensive footnotes of the pre-

vious editions. Like "a commentary on the commentary," these old footnotes were helpful in bringing up theological differences on current issues.

Since volumes have been written on Calvin, no defense or extolling is required here. Because Calvin upheld the full inspiration of the Word and the deity of Christ, his commentaries will continue to have a place on a minister's shelves. The soul of the reviewer was refreshed as he reread this great portion of Scripture.

JAMES H. GABHART

Union Gospel Church  
Waterloo, Iowa

ARCHAEOLOGY IN BIBLICAL RESEARCH.  
By Walter G. Williams. Abingdon Press,  
Nashville, Tenn., 1965. 223 pp., \$4.75.

In many respects this volume represents an excellent introduction to the field of archaeology. The author gives a good sketch of the history of this science emphasizing the techniques and personalities involved over the centuries. The discussions of how a site is selected, how the personnel are acquired, and the methods employed in dating the findings all serve well to acquaint one with the task of the archaeologist. Different types of excavation such as stratigraphical and underwater, along with definitions of surface survey, dendrochronology and soundings are explained very clearly for even the beginner.

Included are an extensive bibliography and lists of archaeological journals which would assist the serious student as would his fine chapter concerning the problems of ancient languages.

Yet, despite all of the informative mat-

erial the author chooses to take an interpretative position of archaeology which is completely opposed to that of the conservative. He states, "There has been some wholesome reaction to the so-called 'escalator view of history,' but a retreat to former theological conservatism is not wholesome" (p. 102). With this presupposition the author attacks numerous conservative positions while hidden in the cloak of archaeology.

To mention but a few, the author holds that Akhenaton's "Hymn to Aton" is the basis of Psalm 104; that Exodus 21-23 evolved from Hammurabi, Lipit-Ishtar and Eshnunna Codes; that part of Deuteronomy was written to correct Solomon, that monotheism evolved from Akhenaton's advanced henotheism; and naturally, that there were multiple authors of the Pentateuch.

The great danger of such a work is that the author makes accusations in such a manner as to insist that it is a proven fact. Concerning Genesis he says, "Careful reading of the early chapters in Genesis (1-11) does indicate to the reader that there is literary dependence upon the non-Hebrew documents. This position is too well established to be denied at this late date" (p. 153). The fact of the matter is that numerous scholars do deny this.

The author likewise suggests the method of surface survey which Nelson Gleuck employed demonstrates that the exodus from Egypt could not have happened before the thirteenth century B.C. In stating this Doctor Williams commits a gross oversimplification of the problem.

For the person who wants to read a good succinct survey of the field of Biblical archaeology this book could be a gift; however, for the individual not grounded solidly in his faith

this could be a millstone.

WILLIAM L. COLEMAN  
St. Clair Shores, Michigan

SPEAKING IN TONGUES AND DIVINE HEALING. By Robert P. Lightner. Regular Baptist Press, Des Plaines, Illinois, 1956. 64 pp., \$.75.

This booklet will provide a good, introductory study to these important subjects. However, because of its brevity, it will not add any significant truth to those who have made a previous study.

His conclusions are that the tongues of Acts and Corinthians are known languages, that the tongues were a sign-gift to Israel and an authentication of the authority of God's message and messenger, and that tongues were temporary.

He claims that Christ did not die to provide immediate deliverance from sickness, that it is not always God's will to heal, and that the gift of healing is not possessed by men today.

No bibliography is given. Few footnotes are cited.

ROBERT GROMACKI  
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DECISION AT DAWN. By Chulho Awe. Harper and Row, Publishers Inc., New York, 1965. 180 pp., \$3.95.

Decision at Dawn is an autobiographical account of the life of a Christian mining engineer in North Korea who was forced from his position into prison and eventually into the underground at the time of the Communist

takeover. In the years following 1948, this capable young man found himself a hunted fugitive because he refused to give up Christianity for Communism. His story, filled with suspense and adorned with many insights into the culture and personality of the Korean people, makes fascinating and easy reading. It ends with his flight to freedom and a new way of life among the refugees in South Korea. The Christian testimony of the author is clear at points, but is often mixed and somewhat overshadowed by his interest in gaining his people's freedom.

The reviewer found this book to be a well-written book and very illuminating concerning the Korean people and Communist domination, but with little about the underground Christian witness of which the subtitle speaks.

HENRY BRYANT

Winona Lake, Indiana

NEW TESTAMENT DETECTION. By Gordon Robinson. Oxford University Press, New York, 1964. 260 pp., \$4.50, paper.

As a detective the author gathers clues, facts, and all relevant data in an attempt to investigate N.T. characters, places, words, and subjects that have long perplexed Bible scholars.

The author must of necessity move from the known to the unknown, sometimes in an imaginative manner. Consequently, the reader may not always agree with the conclusion. Nevertheless, the reader must admit that the identification, inferences, and guesses give a plausible, as well as practical, suggestion to many Bible mysteries.

There are sixty fascinating chapters of five pages each. Preachers will find the

work advantageous for devotionals or prayer meeting studies. The reviewer found many seed thoughts and appreciated the unique manner of presentation.

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THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS. By F. F. Bruce. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1963. 288 pp., \$3.00.

This is one of the Tyndale Bible Commentaries of which R. V. G. Tasker is the General Editor. The author is the well-known prolific writer from England who has lectured in America. His approach is evangelical and scholarly. The book is not particularly homiletical, though many thoughts applicable to discourse will be found by the studious minister. The Tyndale Commentaries purport to be "concise, workable tools for laymen, teachers and ministers." Bruce's book on Romans is precisely that.

The Commentary is based on the Authorized Version since it still is the most popular, but where later versions are more accurate, reference is made to them. Many commentaries have been written on the great Epistle to the Romans. However, more often than not, the authors have, whether consciously or not, modernized Paul's thinking. Bruce states in his preface that Paul "must be allowed to be himself and speak his own language." In the opinion of the reviewer, he has faithfully done this.

In the Introductory chapter (55 pages) the author covers a variety of pertinent subjects, not the least of which is an excellent treatment of "Flesh and Spirit." The bulk of the book follows an outline, the two principal



points of which are: A. The Gospel According to Paul, 1:16-11:36; and B. The Christian Way of Life, 12:1-15:13. Each subdivision is treated similarly. A digest of the section is followed by illuminating comments, often verse by verse. References are frequently made to the original language, though in a way understandable by the layman.

Bruce has a fine grasp of Paul's use of the Old Testament. For example, one will find such interesting little items as the reference to Isaiah 43:7 to show that man was created for the prime purpose of glorifying God but has fallen to a state that is described in Romans 3:23, "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The struggle within Paul as recorded in chapter 7 is given excellent treatment, with many references to the Old Testament. The Christian "lives in two worlds simultaneously." He lives in this world temporarily, but spiritually he is a citizen of the new world. So long as he lives "between the times" he will be involved in a struggle in which victory only comes through Christ.

At the conclusion of the book is to be found a fine bibliography, 41 listings on Romans and 28 on Paul. We do not find some of the American favorites, such as Newell, Ironside, and Griffith-Thomas but the ones listed are excellent.

The reviewer does not hesitate to recommend this book to all who desire a fresh look at this great doctrinal Epistle.

STEPHEN C. DEARBORN

John Brown University  
Siloam Springs, Arkansas

MAGNIFICENT PROMISE. By Sherwood Eliot Wirt. Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois. 1964. 129 pp., \$2.75.

There is little doubt that Mr. Wirt has proven himself an able and accomplished writer. Anyone who has read the editorials in "Decision" or the articles which he has authored will attest to his prowess. Unfortunately this edition of an early devotional work does an injustice to his art.

While we can admire his desire to escape archaic, meaningless phrases, yet we wonder if the attempt to compensate has not been overdone. He uses such phrases as "What He is actually doing is sending up a rocket," (p. 2) and, "In the language of our day it could be said that one of Christ's disciples 'turned Him in,' another 'dummied up,' and the rest 'bugged out'" (p. 116).

Mr. Wirt's theology is weak and potentially dangerous. His understanding of the Coming Kingdom does not seem to picture a triumphant Christ and His saints. "His will is not simply to stop nuclear testing, or segregation; His will is to bring in the whole Kingdom of God through sacrifice" (p. 98). Few statements could make a post-millennialist happier.

We must likewise question his reference to the communion service when he says, "The unholy hand becomes holy when it takes the sacred bread" (p. 89).

One needs to be careful not to make sweeping generalities; however, it appears that some of the generalities in the volume are particularly regretful. The author states, "To my new eyes the creative personalities are those who radiate the love of their Lord." (p. 39). He then proceeds to list both Billy Graham and Albert Schweitzer. Certainly no one reading the works of these two men could conclude that both men believe in the same Christ, which this paragraph implies.

The same mistake is made when the

author mentions organizations who are serving "in the name of Jesus" (p. 28) and lists among them the Red Cross.

This observer believes that this volume lacks directive, is entirely too loose in its distinctives and theology and is a poor representative of Mr. Wirt's attributes.

WILLIAM L. COLEMAN  
St. Clair Shores, Michigan

THE KINGDOM OF THE CULTS. By Walter R. Martin. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1965. 443 pages, \$5.95.

This volume by Walter R. Martin is a welcome addition to the study of the major cult systems of the present Christian era. It compares favorably with Van Baalen's Chaos of Cults and Gerstner's Theology of the Major Sects, the two major works of evangelical import in this field. It is a scholarly production written by a man who has specialized in producing literature concerning the cults of the day. The reader is doubtless familiar with such books of his as Jehovah of the Watch Tower, The Christian Science Myth and The Maze of Mormonism besides a number of booklets on the various cults. Mr. Martin is Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at The King's College, Briar Cliff, New York and Director of the Christian Research Institute, with headquarters located at Wayne, New Jersey.

As the subtitle of the book indicates, The Kingdom of the Cults is "an analysis of the major cult systems in the present Christian era." The work is well documented and at the end there is a full bibliography of each cult that has been treated. It is the result of careful research and its author has brought

into his treatment the latest pronouncements of the cultists under discussion. He has not been satisfied simply to quote from the older authorities but has studied carefully the latest interpreters of these heretical movements. The writer of this review has been impressed with his fairness in setting forth the views of the cultists but always in his conclusions he presents the authoritative viewpoint of the Word of God.

In addition to presenting Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, Mormonism, Spiritism, Father Divine's Peace Mission Movement, Theosophy, Bahaism, Anglo-Israelism, etc. in their true light, he also shows the responsibility of the church with respect to these heretical sects both at home and on the mission fields of the world, and offers cogent suggestions as to how these cults should be reached.

The book contains 19 chapters, two columns to a page, or 358 pages in the main part of the book. Then it has an appendix, pp. 359-431, in which the author deals with Seventh-day Adventism, Unitarianism and the Rosicrucian Fellowship. His chapter on Seventh-day Adventism will doubtless bring forth some outspoken rebuttal, inasmuch as Professor Martin does not look upon this group as heretical in the same sense as the others with which he has previously dealt. While he recognizes its serious errors and repudiates them vigorously in his chapter, yet because they believe in such orthodox doctrines as the inspiration of the Scriptures, the deity of Christ, His substitutionary work and His Second Advent, he feels that this group should not be classified as a cult as the others have been. However, after reading through Martin's long refutations of the errors of this movement, this reviewer was made to wonder whether his viewpoint is fully justified, although he is in agreement with

the author in believing that among Seventh-day Adventists there are many true believers in spite of the errors they embrace.

In the main this work is highly recommended and doubtless will come to be looked upon as a monumental contribution in its field.

HOMER A. KENT, SR.  
Grace Theological Seminary

A CHRISTIAN INTRODUCTION TO RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD. By Johannes G. Vos. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 79 pp., \$1.50, paper.

This is a short paperback book that is exactly what its title signifies. It gives brief and to the point information concerning the major non-Christian religions of the world: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Shinto, Mohammedanism, and Judaism. It is written by an evangelical Christian and the author thus points out the defects of each system and how these defects are answered by Biblical Christianity.

Each chapter is concluded with a set of questions which help the reader to test his comprehension of its contents. The book thus should be valuable for study groups and for personal reference on the part of those who wish merely the gist of the great religions of the world and their contrast with the Christian faith.

The book is very simple, clear and concise but written by a Christian scholar who knows whereof he writes. Dr. Vos is professor and Chairman of the Department of Biblical Literature at Geneva College and a former missionary to Manchuria and China where he came in contact with some of the

religions about which he writes. This reviewer recommends this little work as a very useful text for introductory study of the subject it discusses.

HOMER A. KENT, SR.  
Grace Theological Seminary

WAR IN HEAVEN. By Charles Williams. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, reprinted 1965. 256 pp., \$1.95, paperback.

This is a disappointing novel. The story concerns the solution of a murder mystery intertwined with a search in England for the supposed Holy Grail. The flavors of religion, philosophy and metaphysics are blended into an occult setting. Few novels could be as adventurous, emotional and horrifying. The depravity of man in a dilapidated society is portrayed in grotesque charm. From the introductory sentence of a ringing telephone with only a corpse to answer until the semi-glorification of semi-bad characters, the story is both thrilling and fascinating. No author could picture more vividly the inner emotions and mental operations of man.

This novel has so many short-comings that it could hardly be classified as Christian fiction. There is a glorification of demonic influence to include denudation of a leading female character and a gruesome murder of a male. Suggestive seduction crops up. Cigarette smoking is condoned. At least fifty (50) times, profanity is expressed. This number includes the frequent use of God's name in vain. The occasional recourse to the Scriptures seems inappropriate or misinterpreted. A satirical "Christ" in the character of Prester John transmits the feelings of hopelessness and confusion. It is recognized that modern Christian fiction

presents a supremely sheltered church and world. However, this novel could never be bread for a hungry literary world.

Being a pastor, the reviewer now wonders how he could use this novel. Parishioners would be shamed and the unsaved repelled from the Gospel. In fact, this novel would cancel out the Biblical teaching of past years. With several good books still out of print, the reviewer wishes a better reprinting selection could be made than the works of the late Charles Williams.

JAMES H. GABHART

Waterloo, Iowa

A HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS. By Stephen Neill. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 622 pp., \$7.50.

Here is a quite recent reference tool on the history of missions, loaded with data.

The book jacket says the work is "the first attempt in English to provide a readable history of the worldwide expansion of all the Christian denominations--Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, and Protestant." This is erroneous. Anglican is a single Protestant denomination and the term Protestant covers a large number of denominations, most of which are left untouched in Neill's volume. After all, one volume could not begin to refer to the missionary work of all Protestant groups even superficially. Recognizing such a fact of life, Neill states in his preface: "If every country in the world has to be separately treated, every single missionary society commended, every outstanding missionary and convert listed, the result is almost bound to be an arid catalogue of dates, events, and names." Yet those three elements pervade Neill's work. But the dates, events, and names are laced together with historical facts, Neill's observations

and interpretations and sufficiently frequent citations from assorted references to lend scholarly touches.

The initial chapter on the origin of Christianity is too much a display of the author's philosophy. Chapters 2 through 7 give a wealth of useful information over 18 centuries of world missions history, much of which is assembled in Neill's book for perhaps the first time in English. Due to the magnitude of missionary activity since 1800, Neill's work provides heavier reading from chapter 8 on. Chapter 13--From Mission to Church--traces the development of ecumenism among the far-flung foreign missionary boards.

Pages 559-577 comprise the author's conclusion. His appraisal of the present situation in regional missionary areas is a cogent presentation of conditions facing not only on-the-field missionary board employees but also the young indigenous churches. Neill states on page 572: "The age of missions is at an end; the age of mission has begun." Such an observation is not a mere playful exercise in the words missions and mission. For indeed the concept of missions and the activity of missionaries conducted during the nineteenth century and the first half of this century is necessarily shifting--even among conservative missionary organizations. Indigenous churches are springing up everywhere and unless the modern missionary slants much of his work toward guiding the young national churches to practice their mission, failure could result.

The ecumenical emphasis in Neill's book is natural. After all, he was associate general secretary of the World Council of Churches, 1948-1951. He is missions and ecumenical theology professor at the University of Hamburg, since 1962. Missions lecturer at Cambridge University, 1945-1950,

Neill lectured at Pacific School of Missions, Berkeley, California, Toronto, Buenos Aires, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Melbourne (Australia) and University of Hamburg 1950-1957.

India's missions history looms large in Neill's book for he was an Anglican missionary in India 1924-1930, teacher at Bishops' Theological College in southern India 1930-1938 and Bishop of Tinnevely 1939-1945.

Neill refreshingly ignores Albert Schweitzer, avoiding the emotional adulation common to many books on the internationally famous jungle doctor.

While emphasizing African areas stressing ecumenism, Neill omits almost all French-speaking African republics. Madagascar (now Malagasy Republic) has a two-page treatment (pp. 318-319); probably because the first missionaries were of the London Missionary Society. Other French-speaking republics probably are overlooked because most missionaries there are conservative theologically. That is why the missions history of these countries is left out in most missions history treatises with an ecumenical bias.

Neill's work contains 22 pages of bibliography. He praises R. H. Glover's Progress of World-wide Missions; charges J. C. Thiesen's Survey of World Missions as unreliable and inadequate (this reviewer agrees). Many of the bibliography titles are available only in Europe.

BENJAMIN HAMILTON  
Grace Theological Seminary

INTERPRETING THE BIBLE. By A. Berkeley Mickelsen. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1963. 379 pp., \$5.95.

The Professor of Bible and Theology of the Graduate School of Wheaton College has given us a volume dealing with the science of hermeneutics which is both thorough in its organization and comprehensive in its contents.

While not formulating a propositional statement concerning the nature of Biblical inspiration the author seems to hold a position which would be harmonious with what premillennial dispensational theologians would call plenary verbal inspiration (pp. 91-95). He is to be commended for this. Because of this basic all-important position in the science of hermeneutics the author constantly affirms the necessity for the interpreter to be well versed in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts of the Scriptures as well as archeological and historical data. His constant emphasis upon the text is greatly appreciated.

The author's consideration of special hermeneutics (growing out of his excellent consideration of general hermeneutics) is of great value. He not only alerts his readers to the material involved in special hermeneutics (viz., figurative language, prophecy, poetry, doctrinal teachings, etc.) but also fully explains and adequately illustrates each classification. Dr. Mickelsen is to be especially commended for his handling of the subject of typology. He carefully distinguishes typology from allegory. In this consideration users of this volume will find great help in the section dealing with "interpretation of the Old Testament in New Testament Quotations and Allusions" (pp. 255-262). This section alone is worth the price of the book. It will help the Bible interpreter understand the New Testament author's often puzzling use of the Old Testament.

The value of the author's work is greatly enhanced by the extensive general bibliog-

raphy, index of subjects, and index of Scriptures. These all aid in making the book readily usable as a research book for assistance on particular passages with which a preacher might be working.

This book is heartily recommended for use in the classroom (especially on graduate levels) as well as in the pastor's personal study.

PAUL R. FINK

Grace Theological Seminary

A MANUAL FOR BIBLICAL PREACHING. By Lloyd Merle Perry. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1965. 197 pp., \$4.95.

Dr. Perry, author and co-author of a number of works in the field of homiletics and Professor of Practical Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, has produced yet another work which is just what its name implies. Here is a homiletical handbook that will provide a pattern for the neophyte preacher in formulating his program of sermon preparation and yet will provide aid for the seasoned preacher who desires to improve his technique in sermon preparation. The emphasis of the book is upon gathering and organizing the material for the sermon.

Dr. Perry suggests seven organizational patterns for sermonic preparation. In setting these forth he carries the homiletician through twelve logical steps of sermon preparation setting forth his ideas, definition, explanation, and illustration. A preacher who is having difficulty in constructing his sermons may find that these organizational ideas will supply the key to his problem. Perhaps he is attempting to undertake a phase of sermon preparation out of its log-

ical order.

The first half of the volume, described above, makes the greater contribution to the preacher though the last half contains many helpful suggestions for preaching Biblical sermons on all kinds of special occasions.

One of the most helpful aspects of the volume is the extensive bibliography on homiletical books to guide the preacher in further research and in buying books for his own library.

Dr. Perry is to be commended for his work in making this tool available to his preaching colleagues and especially for his emphasis upon the necessity for the preacher to draw his main and supporting points directly from the text which he is treating. One might wish, however, that the author had given more attention to developing his suggestion concerning grammatical analysis as the means of surveying the content of the preaching portion (p. 10). The volume by its very nature is intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive but in the process provides much grist for the homiletician's mill to guide him in his most important work--sermon preparation.

One observation remains to be made which is not within the author's domain. It seems that the price of the volume is a little high, considering its format (reproduced typewritten notes which well may have stemmed from a homiletics class syllabus), though the binding and paper are good and thus help to offset this drawback.

PAUL R. FINK

Grace Theological Seminary

CALVIN'S NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES: HEBREWS AND 1 AND 2 PETER.

Translated By W. B. Johnston, Edited by David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1963. 368 pp., \$6.00.

Here is a new translation by W. B. Johnston of the commentaries that came from the pen of the genius of Geneva dealing with the books of Hebrews and 1 and 2 Peter. It is volume twelve in this series of completely new translations into modern English of Calvin's commentaries on the New Testament. The volume is given wholly to exegesis and the reader will find little help on critical problems (though Calvin does state his position on the most important critical problems) except as they are directly involved in exegesis.

The translator, editors, and publisher are to be commended for making these old and yet ever-fresh classical commentaries available in this new garment to today's exegetes.

PAUL R. FINK

Grace Theological Seminary

ADMINISTRATING CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. By Robert K. Bower. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1964. 170 pp., \$3.95.

Regardless of the size of the church the administration of its Christian education program is always a concern to its pastor, DCE, and all involved in the program. Every church has an administration--though it may be poor in quality and ineffective in its work.

The professor of Christian Education of Fuller Theological Seminary has contributed to the field of Christian education a work which is of great help in the theory and practice of church programs. He deals with

basic problems and principles that are true of any church.

The reader will appreciate the fact that the author is not content merely to set forth the theory or the principles but also stresses the how of administration. The value of the volume is enhanced by the references to administrative techniques at the end of most of the chapters. These references illustrate the principles described and explained within the preceding portion of the chapters. They also make frequent reference to applied administrative techniques contained in the appendix (which in itself is a gold mine of ideas). A number of charts and illustrative figures throughout the volume help to make it very practical. Samples of many administrative forms are also included which are of great value for they serve as ready patterns for a particular form that an administrator might desire to draw up to assist him in the work of his own Christian education program.

The application of the best principles of business and educational administration, military organization, and personnel supervision to the field of Christian education administration makes the book most useful to the ministers and leaders of any church's Christian education program. It is also helpful as a supplementary text in college and seminary courses dealing with the Administration of Christian Education. To all who for any reason may have occasion to look into the field of Christian education administration, this book is heartily recommended.

PAUL R. FINK

Grace Theological Seminary

AN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW. By Herschel H. Hobbs. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1965. 422 pp., \$6.95.

This is the first volume in a new expository series by Baker Book House. Its author is the respected pastor of the First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, past president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and preacher on the Baptist Hour program.

This book makes no claim of technical scholarship. Consequently, there is little documentation in the work. A list of ten helpful source books is given in the Introduction (p. 8), but no other bibliography is included. The material is organized on a chapter basis, and develops the theme that Jesus is the King. Slightly more than one page is devoted to the problems of authorship and date. The exposition proceeds not verse by verse, but paragraph by paragraph.

Much of the discussion abounds with insights drawn from comparing the Synoptic accounts. The author employs Greek word studies upon occasion. When dealing with disputed passages, he mentions opposing views in a courteous manner before stating with reasons his own interpretation. He is not a dispensationalist, and thus his exposition of certain passages seems inadequate to this reviewer. For example, Dr. Hobbs sees the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven as declaring exactly the same truth (p. 176). This redundancy he explains as an example of Hebrew parallelism. Facing the same problem with the parables of the hid treasure and the pearl, he gives the same explanation (p. 176).

The author's treatment of the Olivet

Discourse reveals his belief in the imminent return of Christ (p. 333), and yet his post-tribulational view of that return. This is accomplished by viewing the tribulation as merely the suffering of believers throughout this age. He states on page 341: "In this light, therefore, the writer concludes that the 'tribulation' refers to the suffering of the saints in preaching the gospel throughout the period from Jesus' ascension until His return (cf. Matt. 24:8-13)."

Regarding the rapture of believers he writes: "But the writer sees only one second coming of Christ with a separation of the saved from the lost. In many references in the New Testament mention is made only of the saved being caught up to be with the Lord. But in such passages the emphasis is upon the Christians with no reference to the unsaved. However, by putting all the passages together, the more likely picture seems to involve one coming and one judgment, with the separation of the saved and unsaved described therein. One cannot be dogmatic at this point, but can only interpret it as he sees it" (p. 344).

Although one's eschatological views may differ from the author, there is much value in this book. Its author accepts the Gospel as indeed the word of God, and offers much help to the expositor.

HOMER A. KENT, JR.  
Grace Theological Seminary



## BOOKS RECEIVED

- THE NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARY ON THE OLD TESTAMENT: THE BOOK OF ISAIAH, Vol. I. By Edward J. Young, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 534 pp., \$7.95.
- MINISTRY. By Robert S. Paul. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 252 pp., \$5.00
- KEEPING THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS. By Handel H. Brown. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 167 pp., \$3.50.
- THE BURDEN OF SØREN KIERKEGAARD. By Edward John Carnell. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 174 pp., \$3.50.
- BY WHAT AUTHORITY? By Bruce Shelley. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 166 pp., \$1.95, paper.
- THE CRUCIALITY OF THE CROSS. By P. T. Forsyth. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1909. 104 pp., \$1.45, paper.
- THE SOUL OF PRAYER. By P. T. Forsyth. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1916. 92 pp., \$1.45, paper.
- THE CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY. By Arthur E. Grof. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 207 pp., \$3.95.
- TYNDALE BIBLE COMMENTARIES--THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS. By Alan Cole. Wm. B. Eerdmans, G.R., 1965. 188 pp., \$3.25.
- ADVENTURES OF A DESERTER. By Jan Overduin. Wm. B. Eerdmans, G.R., 1965. 153 pp., \$3.50.
- NEW TESTAMENT TIMES. By Merrill C. Tenney. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 395 pp., \$5.95.
- THE WORD GOD SENT. By Paul Scherer. Harper & Row, N. Y., 1965. 273 pp., \$4.95.
- PROTESTANTISM IN TRANSITION. By Charles W. Kegley. Harper & Row, N. Y., 1965. 282 pp., \$5.75.
- MINISTERS' WIVES. By William Douglas. Harper & Row, N. Y., 1965. 265 pp., \$4.95.
- TOTAL CHRISTIANITY. By Frank Colquhoun. Moody Press, Chicago, 1962. 91 pp., \$.95, paper.
- J. HUDSON TAYLOR. By Dr. & Mrs. Howard Taylor. Moody Press, Chicago, 1965. 362 pp., \$.95.
- HIGLEY COMMENTARY: INTERNATIONAL UNIFORM SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS, 1966. Ed. by J. A. Huffman. Lambert Huffman Publishing, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1965. 528 pp., \$3.25.
- THE ANCHOR BIBLE--EZRA NEHEMIAH. By Jacob M. Myers. Doubleday, 1965. 268 pp., \$6.00.
- STEWARDSHIP ILLUSTRATIONS. By T. K. Thompson. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1965. 112 pp., \$1.50, paper.
- THE ARK OF THE COVENANT FROM CONQUEST TO KINGSHIP. By Marten H. Woudstra. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, 1965. 152 pp., \$3.50, paper.

- THE KINGDOM OF THE CULTS. By Walter R. Martin. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 443 pp., \$5.95.
- A SHORT HISTORY OF THE NEAR EAST. By Siegfried J. Schwantes. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 191 pp., \$4.95.
- A MANUAL FOR BIBLICAL PREACHING. By Lloyd Merle Perry. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 215 pp., \$4.95.
- THE PLAGUE OF PLAGUES. By Ralph Venning. The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1965. 288 pp., \$1.50 paper.
- FIVE PIONEER MISSIONARIES. By S. M. Houghton, ed. The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1965. 345 pp., \$1.50 paper.
- MAN IN CONFLICT. By Paul F. Barkman. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 189 pp., \$3.95.
- EASTER FAITH AND HISTORY. By Daniel P. Fuller. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 279 pp., \$4.95.
- NEW PATTERNS OF CHURCH GROWTH IN BRAZIL. By William R. Read. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 240 pp., \$2.45 paper.
- FAITH ON TRIAL. By D. Martin Lloyd-Jones. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 125 pp., \$2.95.







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# FOREIGN MISSIONS IN THE BRETHREN CHURCH

RUSSELL D. BARNARD AND CLYDE K. LANDRUM

The program of missions is the very heart of the Word of God. The challenge from God to His people to preach the Gospel to the world runs through the entire Bible. The history of The Brethren Church is the history of a people who love the Word of God and have taken their stand from the very beginning for a forthright preaching of the Word. Today the motto of The Brethren Church continues to be "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible."

It is only logical that such a Bible-loving people would be responsive to God's appeal to preach the Gospel to all nations. But for many years the missionary program of The Brethren Church was practically non-existent. When once the program got under way, it was carried forward with real enthusiasm. Several principles are basic to the carrying on of foreign missions in The Brethren Church.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

There is no greater command in all the Word of God than that outlined in Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . ." From the beginning, The Brethren Church recognized the Word of God as the only basis of faith and practice, and yet did not seem to recognize the imperative spirit of the Great Commission! Activities in the realm of foreign missions were practically nil prior to 1900. Perhaps this was due to the fact that a considerable number of Brethren people shared one of the three following viewpoints with respect to foreign missions: (1) If God had desired that the heathen should know of the Gospel, He would have arranged for them to hear. This is much the same philosophy as that of those who tried to discourage William Carey in 1792 in his efforts to reach the people of India for Christ; (2) The Great Commission to "Go" was fulfilled in the Pentecost experience; (3) When the United States is all evangelized, and we have Brethren churches in every area, it will be time to think of foreign missions.

Yet, as the nineteenth century drew to a close, there was a brief stirring toward foreign missions in The Brethren Church. In the year 1897 the Brethren national conference took action, approving India as a mission field:

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Dr. Russell D. Barnard is General Secretary of the Foreign Missionary Society of The Brethren Church. Rev. Clyde K. Landrum is Assistant General Secretary of the Society.

At this conference (1897) for the first time the minutes of National Conference contain a caption of a paragraph reading "Foreign Missions," under which there was the following resolution: "The hour is come for foreign missions by The Brethren Church. We endorse Brother J. C. Mackey and commend him to the work in India, with our prayers and support."<sup>1</sup>

However, nothing was done to implement this decision, and things went on as they were.

On September 4, 1900, God moved fifty-three missionary-minded Brethren souls to action! This group met under the trees at Winona Lake, Indiana, and The Foreign Missionary Society of The Brethren Church was formed! The purpose of the newly-organized group was "To carry out the Great Commission of our Lord in Matthew 28:19." This continues to be the purpose of the Society today.

Because of this primary purpose, the Society has never entered into industrialized or cultural missions. In even the medical and the educational work the purpose is disseminating the Gospel and establishing and stabilizing churches in the various lands.

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF FAITH IN GOD IN CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION

The Society fully realizes that in order to have the blessing of the Lord, we must look in faith to God alone. This principle was laid down very concretely in an action having its origin in the Mission Oubangui-Chari (now Central African Republic):

We, the missionaries of the Mission Oubangui-Chari, and the Board of Trustees of The Foreign Missionary Society of the Brethren Church, declare our hearty sympathy with its faith basis, believing, first, that the silver and gold belong to God; second, that we may depend upon Him to supply our every need; and, third, that each individual should be guided by the Holy Spirit regarding what, where and when to give.

Therefore, the Mission Oubangui-Chari trusts in God alone for the necessary funds for the maintenance of the work, and while faithfully teaching the duty of Christian stewardship and presenting the general need of the Mission and of the unreached fields, and while soliciting prayer for the work, does not present any personal needs nor ask men for money for the work.<sup>2</sup>

Members of the Society--and missionaries in particular--look to the Lord, not only for the supplying of the missionaries' personal needs, but also trust Him to supply the needs of the entire Society in its work on all fields.

On the basis of complete faith in God for direction in service on the field, as well as for the supply of financial needs, Brethren young people go forth to serve the Lord.

Brethren testimonies which continued for only a few years began in Iran (Persia), Montreal, Canada, and in two different undertakings in China.

However, our first Brethren mission which continues activity to the present time, began in Argentina in 1909 under the authorization to serve in "the Argentine Republic and neighboring states of South America." Over the years a strong testimony has gone forth through a number of vigorous Argentine Brethren churches, as well as through the witness through radio, literature, bookstores, and Bible institutes.

The mission in what is now known as the Central African Republic, began with the sailing of the "Gribble party" in 1918. Many sorrows and a number of deaths occurred before the work was well established. A great story of Christian perseverance was written at "Camp Wait-Some-More" near Brazzaville and while the pioneer party waited at Carnot to get in to God's appointed field. Through the years the Africa mission has been a fruitful field, reporting at present over 40,000 baptized believers who are members of African Brethren churches.

Approximately thirty years later--in 1949--the third Brethren field was opened, near the mouth of the Amazon River in Brazil. Then, four other fields were opened in rapid succession:

Mexico - 1951  
France - 1951  
Hawaii - 1953  
Puerto Rico - 1959

Fully organized churches are now in operation in most of these fields. District and national conferences are coming into being. They are getting the vision not only to evangelize their own people, but to reach out into other areas.

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMITTING RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GREAT COMMISSION TO FAITHFUL MEN

In the incipient stages of missions development, it is necessary that the missionaries do most of the evangelizing. However, it seems logical that as the work is established, the nationals of the various countries will assume more of the responsibility. From the early years our missionaries have recognized this, and have felt that if great progress is to be made, it must be because the national believers in the various lands do accept responsibility. Finally in 1962 the Board of Trustees of the Society brought together and presented the "Statement of Mission Policy in Relation to the National Churches":

1. General purpose - The purpose of the mission is to evangelize with the goal of establishing local churches.
  - a. Definition of a local church: A local church is a constituted body of baptized believers who (1) meet regularly for worship, prayer, and study of the Word; (2) determine their own membership; (3) discipline their members; (4) choose their leaders; (5) observe the ordinances; (6) handle their finances; (7) carry on a program of evangelization; (8) determine their external relationships.

2. The individual missionary's relationship to the local church.

- a. The goal of the missionary shall be to lead groups of believers into full New Testament organizations having a trained leadership adequate for the needs of each local group.
- b. He shall recognize the autonomy of the local church, once organized, and shall not hold membership nor office in it.
- c. He shall recognize the spiritual equality and potentiality of this church and its members.
- d. He may, at the request of the church, assist by teaching the Word and training leaders.
- e. He may counsel and warn the church.
- f. He will make a gradual and definite withdrawal from these functions while continuing in a ministry of intercession.

This policy, affirming adherence to the indigenous church principle, was approved by all fields.

THE PRINCIPLE OF PERSISTENCE IN ACHIEVING THE GOAL OF THE  
GREAT COMMISSION

Two pertinent problems in this area are (1) the enlisting into the program of both the missionaries and the members of the church at home, and (2) the securing of funds for carrying on the work.

Involved in the enlistment of young people for missionary service are several problems. First, the church must be fully taught that the missionary program is a Biblical program. Or, putting it another way, we must come to see that the Bible is a missionary book. With the motto of "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible," it seems only natural that Brethren people should enthusiastically embrace this Biblical missionary program. Secondly, our young people must be caused to understand that the Great Commission is for all Christians. Too often the responsibility is shifted to the other person. Third, young people must be taught, and must have experience in an aggressive program of personal witness and soul-winning. Dr. Harold Cook says: "The church should help create among its own young people a real concern for others--especially for the non-Christian. When it does this, missionary recruiting becomes easy, for this concern for lost men is the very heart of missions."<sup>3</sup>

Fourth, we must have a successful program of conserving decisions for missionary service, bringing these young people to the point of applying to the board, and to service on the field.

As to the securing of funds, from the very early years support was indicated for missionaries personally. Then for a number of years donors were encouraged to give to the general fund. This was good, but led to rather an impersonal support of "Missionary X."

In recent years a personal support plan was presented by the board of trustees, and has been enthusiastically accepted by many Brethren churches. This commitment to support missionaries personally is arranged congregationally--that is, gifts from the congregations are designated for the missionaries, but given to the Society to administer.

With the total personal support almost complete, and with an outfit plan by which hundreds of people assist in the sending out of new missionaries, we will soon be ready to say to any approvable missionary candidate who applies: "You can go as soon as you have your total support and outfit funds." This in itself should supply workers for our present fields and those needed for the opening of new fields.

The enlistment of full-time supporters at home seems to be about as difficult a problem as the recruitment of missionary candidates. However, through challenges from the Word, missionary conference programs, and well-prepared publicity materials and periodicals, the members of churches at home can be challenged.

Possibly the greatest victories in enlisting financial support from our constituency are coming through the faith-promise plan of foreign missions giving. This is a plan greatly blessed of the Lord through the ministry of Dr. Oswald J. Smith, as outlined in his pamphlet "How God Taught Me to Give." It is simply asking God what He would have one to give, and then trusting God to supply the means necessary to make that gift possible. Dr. Smith says of the plan: "A faith promise offering is between you and God. No one will ever ask you for it. No official will ever call on you to collect it. No one will ever send you a letter about it. It is a promise made by you to God, and to God alone."<sup>4</sup> This is a plan which looks to God vertically rather than to man horizontally. It witnesses to a life that is an open, unclogged channel through which God's blessings can flow. Faith-promise giving is the recommended policy by which an increased number of missionaries can be sent to an enlarged number of fields.

Brethren Foreign Missions will continue to be guided by these principles from "The Book," anticipating the continued guidance and blessing from God. God has given sixty-five great years to the Society. Now, the view is to the future ten years in a "Decade of Decision," looking forward to 1975, the 75th Diamond Jubilee year of service for our Lord. As the future is contemplated, we could do well to remember the words of the old Brethren hymn, supposedly sung by the Brethren upon the eve of their departure from Holland to America in 1729:

The past we leave behind us,  
And faithfully we turn  
To brighter things tomorrow,  
And joys we have not known.

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# THE MISSIONARY-RECRUITING CHURCH

P. FREDRICK FOGLE

The Church of Jesus Christ, since the dawn of modern missions, has been planting the banner of the cross in many lands. It can be found on the banks of the Amazon, in the metropolises of modern Japan, in the foothills of the Himalayas, in the remote villages of Africa and in the charming towns and cities of Europe.

The message permitting this planting has been proclaimed over the years by members of individual local churches. What kind of churches were these which were able to produce people, enough in love with Christ to leave home, loved ones and friends to follow the Lord's call to a foreign country?

The first thought which comes to mind is that these missionary-recruiting churches must have conformed in many respects to the pattern of the churches of the first century. If ever there was a missionary-minded church, it was the church of New Testament times. The New Testament does not systematically outline the missionary program of the individual churches, but the general tenor of its various books, beginning with the Book of Acts, shows plainly that they followed the spirit of Peter's statement, "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

The thriving early churches were thrilled with the prospect of preaching Christ. This was their "meat to eat." This was their life. Even when the first persecutors attempted to discourage the Jerusalem believers in their efforts and caused them to be scattered, they "went everywhere preaching the Word" (Acts 8:1, 4). The "body of Christ" of apostolic days throbbed with a passion for leading men to the Savior.

By the end of the first century, the Gospel had been taken to every major part of the Roman Empire, from Babylon to Spain, and from Alexandria to Rome. In less than seventy years, the estimated 120 men and women of the upper room (Acts 1:15) had grown to nearly a half million.

Wherein lies the secret of such an enviable record? The Book of Acts, the condensed history of apostolic missions, tells the exciting story. And this story presents the characteristics of a missionary-recruiting church.

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## ACCEPTANCE OF THE DIVINE COMMISSION

The last recorded words of the Savior, before His ascension, were those generally termed "the Great Commission." By the disciples who heard them, they were considered as binding. There was no choice. Those men wanted none. Disobedience was unthought of. They knew that "missions is not a side line: it is the lifeline of the Church."<sup>1</sup> In this they followed the proper theology of missions.

Today, believers whom Christ continues to maintain as members of His body have as their commission the communication of the message of salvation to the entire world. Missions must be considered as fundamental and not as supplemental. If the Church does not take this attitude and accomplish the task, then who will? Obviously, no one! No other group of people has the key to unlock the door of hope. No other knows the secret of blessing. No other has been taught the proper philosophy of life.

The body of regenerated believers, to whom the commission has been given, and which constitutes the universal Church, is necessarily broken down into local congregations. The picture is clear. If the Church is to evangelize the world in its own generation, then each individual congregation must become involved in the work of world-wide evangelization. All churches ought to be concerned with this work all the time.

## ATTACHMENT TO THE MESSAGE

The faithful and persistent attachment by the early church Christians to the unique plan and message of salvation sparked the missionary endeavor (see Acts 4:12). Their fidelity brought about the dedication of themselves to the proclamation of this truth.

One main reason for the waning of missionary emphasis in many congregations has been a departure from the fundamentals of the faith. But one must say more. In some evangelical churches, to which this present article is directed, certain people conduct themselves as if Acts 4:12 were no longer true. The plan of salvation has not been modified, but many do not take it seriously, and do not proclaim it with the same urgency and fervor as did the early church.

How can Christian young people be invited and incited to offer their lives for missionary service, unless the local church continues to proclaim the message of salvation and acts as if it believes it with all its heart?

## AWAKE TO THE WORLD'S NEED

Paul, like Christ, pressed on to the next city or town so as to have an opportunity to present the life-giving story. His missionary journeys are too well-known to need repeating here, but the important remark to make is that he traveled from place to place feeling that if he did not tell them of the Lord Jesus, then perhaps no one would.



The crying need in this world today is that the Church recruit its youth and send them out into the world to preach Christ. The sound of this cry is steadily increasing in intensity, for in the last five years, the population of our globe has increased by 500 million to a total of at least 3.3 billion. The cross of Christ remains the world's only hope of redemption. It is high time that true Christians accept the marching orders of the Lord and bar the road to a Christless eternity on which most of these billions are traveling.

### ASSOCIATION WITH THEIR SAVIOR

The strong association with the Lord of the believers at Antioch gave rise to a new name for them: "Christians." They had been recognized as those having been with Christ by faith. Following their evangelization and acceptance of the Savior, they manifested His virtues to such an extent that they were designated thusly.

It was to such a people that the Holy Spirit addressed an appeal for the sending forth of His witnesses on the greatest missionary voyages ever known. The call came to the church as well as to Paul and Barnabas, who were at that time ministering in that local church. The Antioch Church can thus be cited as the prototype of all Christian Churches.

The local church is the divinely-appointed unit for carrying forward the missionary program. How can it do this without sending some of its own youth to the foreign field? Every truly Christ-associated local church (there are some which are not) ought to send at least one person to a foreign field. And it seems to me that that should be considered as only a good beginning.

The Church which does not have young people going out into the service of God in the foreign and home ministries is a church with a vital defect in its outreach. The failure of a church to propagate itself in personnel generally means that the church is not spiritually alert and is probably in a backslidden condition.<sup>2</sup>

### AVERSION TO MATERIALISM

Even in the first century, the Church was not universally victor over materialism as Chapters 5 and 6 of the Book of Acts attest. But materialism was not master as it is in so many twentieth century churches, homes and hearts. The church which is a victim of this pitfall cannot expect to inspire its youth to turn its back on what the adults show to be their first love.

Jesus said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). It is evident that many modern-day Christians have removed this concept from their philosophy.

### AVOIDANCE OF COMPROMISE

One of the most sinister aims of Satan is to lead the Christian into a position of com-

promise. Knowing this, the early Christians fought it continually. (See Acts 4:19-20; 5:29; chapter 15).

The twentieth century has become the age when compromise is the popular and expected thing. In Christendom, the Ecumenical Movement, nurtured by a spirit of compromise, is one of the deadliest enemies of evangelism. Ecumenicity and evangelism are strictly incompatible. Rare will be the church, which after having flirted with the Ecumenical Movement, will send missionaries to foreign fields to proclaim that men are lost and need to be born again. And rare will be the compromising church in any realm and on any level which will see its youth dedicate itself to the work of missions.

### ACTIVE IN A MISSIONARY PROGRAM

It was stated earlier that the New Testament does not give a detailed outline of the missionary program of individual first-century churches. But one thing is sure; they accomplished the task. In the absence of a precise model plan, each congregation must set up a divinely-guided missions program which is practical in its own local situation. Programs do not work magic, but a positive program upon a sound basis, carried forward under the Holy Spirit's direction will do more for the local church and its entire ministry than any other single thing.

#### The Place of the Pastor--the Key Man

The pastor has a role to play which no one else in the congregation can. It has often been said that a church cannot rise above the spiritual level of its pastor. Rare is the church which can recruit missionaries when the pastor is not "sold" on missions.

The pastor is the key agent . . . he is the essential force reaching the people of his church who in turn will make possible the accomplishment of the program he places before them. He is the go-between through whose ministry the lives of men will be challenged to accomplish what the Church has in view for missions.<sup>3</sup>

And it must be solemnly added: it is the pastor who is directly responsible to God for the missionary program in his particular congregation, and will have to give account to Christ at the Bema Seat.

Among other things, it is his responsibility to:

- 1) Have a vision, a love, and a warm heart for world-wide missions.
- 2) Provide the leadership. The vitality of the program depends largely on leadership and the pastor should be that leader.
- 3) Preach messages and teach frequently on missionary subjects. Sunday School classes, Bible classes, teacher-training classes, and new convert classes are all popular. Why not

have missions classes in the church? These could have as a definite goal, the placing of the proper stress on the subject and aiding prospective missionary candidates to get the proper perspective of missions as a vocation. "Not all the training of missionary candidates is carried on by Bible Institutes, Seminaries and other missionary schools. The local church does its part."<sup>4</sup>

4) Challenge young people to enter missionary service. Young people everywhere are searching for a worthwhile cause to which they can wholly commit themselves. The missionary-minded pastor will have little difficulty in helping them find what they are searching for.

5) Supply pertinent and up-to-date information to the members. This can be most effectively accomplished by direct and sustained contact with foreign fields. "Psychologically, the will cannot be moved until the heart has first been moved. And the heart is moved by information . . . and when the knowledge has touched the heart, it will lead to action."<sup>5</sup>

6) Secure prayer support at all costs. It is not general, half-hearted prayer which will reap results, but rather as one missions executive has stated: "Every member of the Church should be praying for specific missionary needs and opportunities."<sup>6</sup>

7) Inaugurate a precise plan for purposeful giving. The "faith-promise plan" has been effectively used in many church groups. It provides the possibility of making a personal promise to the Lord to give on the basis of faith. Some may feel that this is a regimentation of giving, but such is not the case. We are living in a world where challenges are constantly given and goals are set in every realm. These modern methods can also be used for the Lord's glory.

An interesting example of missionary giving is that of a church in San Luis Obispo, California. The first Sunday of the month, all offerings go to the pastor. The second Sunday, they are used for local needs. The remainder of the month, all offerings go to missions.

### The Participation of the Local Church

Expansion of the local church in its immediate surroundings and to the "uttermost parts" should be its natural, spontaneous, well-programmed action. The missionary emphasis should not be separate from the rest of the church program, but a necessary, normal and integral part of all planning and thrust. "Missions can never be just a private affair. It always involves the church."<sup>7</sup>

Now, what leads to this active participation?

1) Submitting to Christ.

It is a church in which each member is surrendered to Christ and willing to go, if God were to call, that is the most likely to produce missionaries. Not every volunteer or interested

person will land in some foreign country to undertake the task of soul-winning for Christ. Some will be ruled out for one reason or another, but "still it is the ones who have such a willing heart that Christ can use in every kind of Christian work."<sup>8</sup>

2) Witnessing to its own constituency.

As a general rule, the local church, which is interested in carrying on a positive testimony for Christ in its own town, will also become interested in people in foreign lands.

3) Fostering missionary interest in the homes of the members.

I have heard a number of testimonies to the effect that the presence of missionaries and other servants of the Lord in the home has been used of God to stimulate the youth of these homes to offer themselves for specialized Christian service. One of the greatest ways a parent can help in the missionary cause is to be willing for his child to become a Christian worker, talk with him about it and then pray that he, himself, be the privileged parent of a young person with this high-calling.

4) Enlisting the youth.

There has been notorious failure in many churches to get young people involved in evangelism where they are, and then inspire them to enter missionary service. That is why the matter is being mentioned several times in this article. "Until the spirit of happy obedience lays its hand upon God-called and God-directed and God-equipped young men and women for missionary service, the local church remains, whatever else may be said about it, not fully pleasing to God" (emphasis mine).<sup>9</sup>

5) Organizing missionary conferences.

Any church can hold a dynamic and successful missionary convention, and it should become the outstanding event of the year. In fact, the missionary program could include several during the year. A possible substitute for a good conference is a year-round church missions program. This takes considerable determination and perseverance, but it can be done. Recently one pastor informed me that he never has a missionary conference as such, but emphasizes missions every Sunday. It is interesting to note that his congregation's missionary offering saw an increase of 65% in 1965 over that of 1964.

6) Setting definite goals.

In my experience of furlough deputation after three terms of service in a foreign land, one of the greatest weaknesses I have noticed is the lack of definite goals in missions on the part of the church as a whole and during the missionary conference in particular. So much depends upon having goals. And the exercise of faith is a necessary prerequisite to the setting of goals. Is that perhaps the reason so few are set?

## ASSISTED BY THE MISSIONARY

This, now, is the church's point of view. During their ministry in the Church in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas "sought to help these people establish a vital, dynamic relationship to God through Christ so that He could guide them in the further development of the church."<sup>10</sup> And when the journey was completed, they returned to the home base and "rehearsed all that God had done with them . . ." (Acts 14:26-28). The missionary, though often absent, can help considerably in the recruitment of personnel.

After this brief consideration of some of the characteristics of the early Church which made it a missionary-recruiting church, and attempt to make comparisons and practical applications for our own day of what is found in the New Testament, it is fitting to add the following words of A. T. Pierson. Though written over a half century ago, they are still appropriate.

Could the whole Church just now determine in God's strength to allow no retrenchment, surrender no station, withdraw no workmen, but rather multiply her laborers, enlarge her gifts and at once vigorously push for the regions beyond . . . there would come as we solemnly and confidently believe a new era of blessing . . .<sup>11</sup>

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# MISSIONS AND THE SEMINARY CURRICULUM

CHARLES R. TABER

Evangelical churches and church agencies have shown a commendable zeal in promoting foreign missions. Through missionary conferences, missionary publications, and other means, the needs of the world have been kept before the Christian community, and thousands of young people have been induced to give their lives for overseas service.

Unfortunately, this excellent emphasis on promotion, motivation, and recruitment has not been matched by a corresponding interest in the training of missionary candidates. Personal experience, observation of and conversation with dozens of missionaries of many boards and fields, the results of an abortive study attempted several years ago by the writer and Phil Landrum, the perusal of a dozen representative seminary catalogs, and the findings reported in a recent book by Bailey and Jackson<sup>1</sup> all confirm a sad diagnosis: neither seminaries nor mission boards, the agencies most directly concerned, have shown a serious interest in making sure that missionaries were competent as well as spiritual. As a result, many sincere missionaries are working at less than their full potential, and some are actually obstacles in the Lord's work.

Fortunately, there has been lately an apparent awakening on the part of some boards and some seminaries. A recent series of articles in World Vision Magazine attests to a promising ferment.<sup>2</sup> It is the purpose of this paper to make concrete proposals as to what a seminary curriculum suitable for the training of missionaries should look like. It is based on three premises. First, a standard seminary curriculum is not by itself adequate. Second, it is the joint responsibility of seminaries and boards to provide the needed training. Third, prospective pastors will also benefit from this curriculum revision.

## THEOLOGICAL CURRICULUM

The theological curriculum is the foundation on which the education of both pastors and missionaries must be built. It comprises Biblical studies, doctrinal studies, and historical studies.

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Biblical studies. This is the area most adequately covered by the present curricula. There is need, however, to give increased attention to the light afforded by studies of the cultural setting of the Biblical account. Not only would the missionary preacher, teacher, and translator be helped in finding the real significance of some feature, but the preacher at home would be spared a large dose of unconscious eisegesis if each recognized the profound differences between various cultures. Biblical languages, which could have been handled here, will instead be treated later, under the heading "linguistics."

Doctrinal studies. In this area, the sector which most needs strengthening is the doctrine of the Church. On the one hand, ecclesiology is too often treated as an appendage to a one-semester course in soteriology or eschatology. The course, as outlined, is static and structural: the origin of the Church, the membership of the Church, its organization and officers (with consideration of the controversies about church government), its ordinances, etc. On the other hand, the theology of missions (or missionary principles, or the indigenous church) is handled as a separate, unrelated, superficial, and essentially remedial course. What is needed is not the neglect of what is presently emphasized, but the completion of the lop-sided and fragmented picture. The static and structural view of the Church must be supplemented by the dynamic and functional view of the Church. Not only does the Church have relations to its Lord, and internal relations among its members, but also external relations to the world. The Great Commission, Pentecost (not merely as a convenient beginning date!), the teaching of John 17:11, 14-16 concerning the tension of being in the world but not of it--these belong in a dynamic treatment of the Church in relation to the world. And this, if anything, is the theological foundation of missions. As Herbert C. Jackson has said, "The missionary obligation of theology is that of constituting theology not as a set of formulations but as a dynamic inquiry functioning always at the frontiers where Christian faith meets unfaith. . . ." <sup>3</sup> The point that needs to be emphasized is that at the theological level there are no differences between sending church and receiving church, between home and foreign field, between full-time and part-time worker. These are all practical matters, of importance in their place. The duty of theology is to transcend these superficial differences and to see the Church as a whole in relation to its Lord, to its members, and to the world.

There would be no reason for the existence of separate courses in the theology of missions--if the central course in ecclesiology did its duty.

Historical studies. What is true of doctrine is also true of history. There is no real justification for offering one course in (western) church history, and another in the history of missions. The latter too often tends to become a Protestant hagiography of western missionaries. Here also there is desperate need for an integrated treatment of the whole Church as manifested through time and throughout the world. Courses in world history on secular campuses are gradually being freed from occidental provincialism. It is time courses in church history were too, by recognizing the work of God the Holy Spirit in many places and times and kinds of people.

## PRACTICAL CURRICULUM

A prospective pastor must have help in bridging the gap between the material which has been given him in an academic setting and his functioning in the practical setting of a congregation. He has to learn to apply theological truth to practical situations and problems, to deal with people in terms of their felt needs and in ways they will understand. To this end, the curriculum comprises a measured dose of homiletics, practical theology, and so forth. And we assume a general orientation in psychology, sociology, and philosophy, so that he can understand what makes this society and culture function as it does. The pastor must be taught how to guide a committee and how to officiate at a funeral; he must be instructed in the ethics of his calling and in his legal and civic duties and rights.

Now if all this is necessary for a man who is already thoroughly integrated into his own native society and culture--and it is--how much more essential should it be for someone who is called to work in an alien milieu, in which world view, values, customs, and institutions are radically different. We tend to overlook how enormous are the aspects of culture which we share with members of our society but not with members of other societies. We have been so conditioned by them that they determine our thinking in many ways, just as the lenses of the writer's glasses determine his vision. And in much the same way, we are not really conscious of them; we tend to consider them an immutable part of the nature of things. They are the frame of reference, not subject to change.

But precisely these factors, most completely internalized into a person's psychological make-up, most completely pervasive and determinative, and most completely unconscious, are the factors which differ from culture to culture, and which must be brought into the open and understood if any effective and profound change is to be introduced. It is relatively easy to induce a man to change some external aspect of his behavior, and missionaries sometimes settle for that. It is a different matter, and one that calls for deep insight and sympathy, to introduce change where the Holy Spirit wants to introduce change--at the core of a man's thinking.

It is to assist the missionary candidate in this vital area of effective communication that courses in cultural anthropology, linguistics, and regional studies are essential.

Cultural anthropology. Courses in cultural anthropology are designed to make the student aware of and sensitive to the enormous variability in human culture, especially in the areas of world view, religion, values and ethical norms, social structure, and manners and customs. The aim is to help the student to gain in some measure a more objective view of his own culture, so as to learn to overcome its inherent biases and blind spots and to develop a proper humility in place of his previous total ethnocentrism. He must learn to understand the cues which people give as to their reactions, attitudes, and relationships, so as to avoid faux-pas and needless offense. But even more than this partial divorce from his own culture and understanding of the alien culture, a good course in anthropology should help the missionary candidate to overcome culture shock and to identify himself gradually with the people whom he wishes to serve, to become in some sense one of them, to "become all things to all men" in a



given society. As Sister M. Cuthbert says, "It has always been known and appreciated that in order to witness the gospel to a people, it is required not only to know and live that gospel but also to know and live in a communion of experience with that people."<sup>4</sup>

Linguistics. It would seem axiomatic that no effective missionary work can be done in a language foreign to the people. Yet some missionaries have defended the position that they must work in English (or French, as the case may be) because the languages involved were too hard to learn! It is hard to see why such people go to the field at all. But the position of some boards, in looking for short cuts and cut rates in language learning, is not too much better. There is simply no royal road to language learning.

There is, however, a discipline which can immediately help the missionary in improving the productivity of language learning: linguistics. By providing a measure of understanding of the principles underlying both the universal and the variable aspects of human languages, linguistics can help both the Bible student at home and the missionary preacher, teacher, writer, and translator to gain profound insights into the material he is working with. A seminary should, of course, provide first-rate work in Biblical languages. And any missionary who might conceivably be involved in a Bible translating project should by all means study these. But beyond this, a seminary should not try to teach specific languages. A sound course in introductory linguistics will more than repay itself in efficiency and effectiveness when the missionary begins to learn a language on the field, often in most unfavorable circumstances. As Gleason has pointed out, linguistics can contribute to the ministry of the Church in the work of exegesis, translation, and preaching and teaching; in internal communication within the parts of the Church over the world; in understanding the nature of theological language; and in the witness of the Church to the world.<sup>5</sup> Beyond its application to missions in a narrow sense, linguistics justifies its inclusion in the seminary curriculum on many grounds.

Regional studies. It is essential that missionaries gain some knowledge of the history, geography, economics, government, institutions, etc. of the fields to which they will go. Because of the great variability in this area, it may be necessary in some seminaries to handle these studies through reading courses or tutorials.

Miscellaneous. Time in the seminary curriculum is too precious to spend on such things as the mechanics of mission structure and polity, what to take to the field, etc. Such matters are best handled by the board through suitable pamphlets.

Every opportunity should be provided for missionary candidates to become closely acquainted with international students or other nationals from their prospective fields. Such contacts can be most helpful and illuminating in supplementing the insights of the more general and abstract courses.

## CONTINUING TRAINING

It is the conviction of the writer that, given careful planning and ruthless elimination of non-essentials, the program outlined above could be offered within the standard three-year

seminary program. It would mean a common theological core for pastoral and missionary students, and separate practical programs.

But this is not enough. According to Bailey and Jackson, "A glaring lacuna in missionary preparation and stabilization is the almost total failure to make use of the first furlough in a way advantageous to these ends."<sup>6</sup> Once a missionary has been on the field, he is in a position to profit greatly from further opportunities for specialized academic study. No missionary training program is complete that does not make provision for the missionary to spend at least a semester in serious study and research under competent guidance. Insights can be gained which would be impossible without the combination of field experience and academic stimulation.

### FACULTY AND FACILITIES

The only legitimate obstacle to the implementation of such a program is the acknowledged difficulty in finding competent personnel. The requisite combination of field experience, academic competence, and personal and spiritual qualities is not common; where it is found, the person who combines them is irreplaceable. But mission boards will need to make such people available, perhaps through the judicious use of extended furloughs, and seminaries will have to make room for them. The alternative is stagnation in this vital area.

### CONCLUSIONS

This report has been much too brief. Some will doubtless feel that some points have been skimmed, others that assertions are made without sufficient backing. Both failures are acknowledged, and the writer can only refer the reader to fuller treatments elsewhere of various aspects presented here. The point to be made is that the training of missionaries demands the best facilities and the most imaginative planning of which we are capable. It costs no more, in dollars and cents, to send to the field and support a competent missionary than an incompetent one. And the Church cannot afford the negative effect on its witness of people who in all sincerity do not know what they are doing. The program outlined is a difficult one, but the cost of failure makes it imperative.

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# THE PROBLEM OF MISSIONARY VOLUNTEER DROP-OUTS

J. PAUL DOWDY

In recent years the high school drop-out problem has become a matter of some concern, and is receiving serious attention in some quarters. In view of the serious consequences for both the drop-out and the community, parents and civic leaders as well as educators must work together in seeking a solution.

There is another kind of drop-out who deserves some serious consideration. This is the missionary volunteer drop-out. Obviously the whole community will not become concerned with this problem. It is a problem for the church, and every church member should help to solve it. Unfortunately not all are even aware that there is a problem. Worse yet, it appears that no organized, concentrated effort to cope with the situation is under way on a denominational or missionary society scale. The Brethren Youth Council is now developing a registry or file card system for the purpose of maintaining vital contact with volunteers for full-time Christian service. This is commendable and should prove to be very useful. Most Christians who attend church regularly will be aware of the fact that in youth rallies, camps, and evangelistic meetings a goodly number of young people offer their lives for service. Then from time to time they also hear of how few there are who actually become candidates for the mission field.

By way of comparison it can be seen that this kind of drop-out is a more serious matter than the high school drop-out. The student who fails to finish high school or college will find it difficult to secure profitable employment. The results of such a situation are largely personal and mainly in the economic realm, though frequently also producing moral problems. The missionary volunteer drop-out does not escape the personal consequences which, in this case, are mainly spiritual. In addition, the failure to go on to the mission field will affect the eternal well-being of perhaps hundreds of other people. His failure to go with the gospel to the lost of the world results in irreparable consequences.

For several years the shortage of candidates has been causing concern among mission leaders. In a special missions issue of Moody Monthly magazine last year it is said that the director of TEAM "asserts that evangelical missionary societies need no less than 7,500 new

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missionaries to meet present demands."<sup>1</sup> To recognize such a need raises the question, "Where are the applicants?"

Since there are statistics to show the general picture of just about everything, it might be assumed that reliable statistics regarding missionary volunteer drop-outs would be a matter of interest to most church denominations. Apparently no exact records have been kept over a period of years to show exactly how many young people offer themselves for missionary service and how many of them fail to go on even to the point of filing an application with a mission board. Dr. Harold R. Cook, head of the Department of Missions of Moody Bible Institute and the author of several books on missions, says he knows of no authoritative statistics on this subject. He says that there are some "floating around," but that he has not been able to trace them to their source and thus check their reliability. Ruth I. Johnson, in her booklet, The Years Between, says, "If you have checked statistics at all, you have probably learned that out of every fifty young people who volunteer for foreign missionary work, only one actually becomes a missionary."<sup>2</sup> She seems to feel that statistics on the subject are available, but cites no source.

In the attempt to secure information on this subject a hasty survey was made among a small number of pastors who have had some years of experience and with special concern for youth work. Fourteen returned the questionnaire but four of them gave no answer to the question about the number of drop-outs. The others gave mainly approximate numbers, as accurate records had not been kept.

The results of this small-scale survey will serve, however, to give a crude picture of what has been happening. Of a total of one hundred and fifty young people who had responded to the invitation to dedicate their lives to missionary service, only fifteen were known to be continuing in preparation with the mission field in view. These figures correspond roughly with those previously mentioned as found in Ruth Johnson's book.

So, for the present, if we may assume that the proportion of fifteen out of one hundred and fifty is more or less accurate, then the situation is serious. It is even worse when we remember that some of these are in the very early stages of preparation (in high school and college), and all may not continue to the candidate stage.

Without a doubt all of those who made decisions for missionary service did so with sincerity. Then what happened to the great majority of them? The pastors who returned the questionnaires gave several reasons to account for the fact that so many turn aside from their purpose to become missionaries, and settle for other types of occupation. Whether or not all of the reasons are valid or justifiable will not be considered here. They should be known to all Christians as things which hinder young people from going to the mission fields of this needy world. They must be given prayerful and constant consideration by all who may have an opportunity to help, instruct, or encourage volunteers to be steadfast in the purpose to which they commit themselves. Here are the reasons given (numerical order in this list does not imply order of importance):

1. Materialism
2. Marriage
3. Morals
4. Financial burdens
5. Improper understanding of their commitment
6. Afraid of the personal sacrifice involved
7. Failure to see missionaries who are really thrilled and excited with the work on the field
8. Lack of constant encouragement and help from pastors and families
9. The attraction of more profitable and less taxing work
10. Unable to do the school work required
11. Lack of initiative
12. Later decided that the mission call was a mistake on their part
13. Lack of emphasis on missions in college
14. Unwillingness of parents to have them go to a mission field

It will be readily seen that apart from the personal responsibility of the individual concerned, a grave responsibility rests upon parents, pastors, Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, college teachers, and missionaries to help young missionary volunteers remain on their course until they arrive at the time for an interview with a mission board.

It is true, our Lord said: "Pray ye . . . the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." But at the same time we must remember that the Lord of the harvest has laid the responsibility for worldwide evangelism upon His followers, upon men and women. Whatever reason the Lord might have for making frail human beings so largely responsible for the task of making His grace known to the lost, we must accept the fact that it is so. The apostle Paul implies this when he asks: "and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Romans 10:14b, 15a). Even Paul himself was not sent as a missionary by the Holy Spirit apart from the ministry of the church (Acts 13:3, 4).

There is one other matter which deserves attention in the treatment of the subject of missionary volunteer drop-outs. One of the reasons cited above is that of uncertainty as to the missionary call. Strange as it may seem, this remains, after so many centuries, a very vague and perplexing matter to many Christians. Able writers have set down the factors involved in recognizing the call to the mission field. Authors differ as to just what these factors are, but in general their explanations are simple and practical. Dr. Harold R. Cook sums it all up in one simple statement: "The missionary call is the 'great commission,' plus the assurance in your heart, no matter how it comes, that God wants you as His witness abroad."<sup>3</sup> Viewed in this way, the missionary call consists of two elements: obedience and assurance.

Quite clearly this matter of assurance is the core of the problem. The volunteer who in all sincerity desires to obey the Lord, yet fails to obtain this assurance quite soon, is easily turned aside into other occupations. Assurance is very important and most writers treating the missionary call will include some statement about it. Dr. Glover says: "Nothing could be more vital to anyone setting out for the mission field than to be clearly assured of the call of

the Lord in taking that step."<sup>4</sup> Another writer, referring to his own experience as a student, says that a missionary talked to him personally and said: "David, do not go to the mission field if you can possibly help it." Other statements similar to the one just mentioned are sometimes made by missionary speakers, e.g., "If you can be satisfied doing anything else, don't be a missionary."<sup>5</sup> Such statements are usually spoken in a very solemn and serious manner to impress the would-be volunteer with the awful consequences of making the mistake of going to the field without the assured call of God.

Without questioning for a moment the importance of such a warning, we should ask ourselves if it may properly be included in an appeal for volunteers for mission service. Frankly, I am convinced that it should not be. One pastor says: "The real problem today as I see it is the fact that so very, very few even offer at all." Should we be surprised if few or none volunteer for service after being solemnly warned not to risk making a mistake? The effort to protect the mission field against the danger of the "misfit" easily becomes a block in the way for those who would offer themselves for missionary work. One young lady, believing that she ought to become a missionary, went to her pastor for advice. She was immediately warned that if she were not absolutely sure God had called her for such work, she should forget it. To her question as to how she could be sure there was no satisfactory answer. She continued teaching and later in another city sought counsel from her new pastor and received the same kind of answer. Discouraged and not knowing where to go for help, she continued teaching but always feeling that she should be on a mission field.

Let the warning about the absolute assurance of the call be left until the volunteer has had an opportunity to find out what it is all about, and has been counseled, encouraged, and made the object of much prayer. There is little need to worry so much about the assurance of the call. The long years of preparation accompanied by the providential leading of the Lord will take care of most cases. Mission boards have their own very thorough screening processes.

The appeal should be made for missionary volunteers with the idea of encouraging them on to preparation, application, and finally to the field. A careful review of the above reasons given for drop-outs should help in making definite plans for systematic follow-up and help for those who offer themselves for mission work. Thus, by avoiding entirely the frightening subject of absolute assurance when dealing with young volunteers, and then following a careful plan for helping them achieve their goal, the rate of drop-outs should be greatly reduced.

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# A MISSIONARY PEACE CORPS

THOMAS JULIEN

An encouraging sign in an increasingly cynical nation has been the emergence of the Peace Corps and its success in attracting some of our country's finest youth. To say that some join its ranks merely in search of adventure does not alter the fact that others, seeking more in life than a ranch-style home and a 35-hour week, are genuine in their desire to serve others.

It is only natural that the success of the Peace Corps should have provoked renewed interest concerning the advisability of seeking missionary recruits on a short-term basis. If the challenge for short-term service were widely presented in our churches, would our youth respond with the same enthusiasm as others have responded to the Peace Corps? And if so, could they be effectively integrated into the existing missionary program, or would their presence cause more problems than it would solve?

It is our privilege to have two young men serving in France for fifteen months as "Cadet Missionaries." Both are students of Grace Theological Seminary, and have taken a year's absence from their studies in order to serve on a foreign field. Not only has their presence made a valuable contribution to the France work; it has also provided an opportunity for evaluating the effectiveness of missionary service on a short-term basis.

## SHORT-TERM MISSIONARIES AND MISSIONARY TRADITION

For some, the very expression "short-term missionary" is in itself a contradiction. In their thinking becoming a missionary implies offering oneself for life, and they would be unwilling to honor anyone with the term "missionary" who intended to serve less than that.

Around the word "missionary" a whole tradition has grown up, permeating the thinking of Christians with regard to service in a foreign land. Most of this tradition is good, for it has been mothered by necessity and experience. Some of it, however, can be detrimental to the ability of the church to respond to new challenges and changing situations in missions. Though much of this tradition is not rooted in the Scriptures, it is nevertheless true that any departure from the accepted way of doing things is viewed with suspicion by some.

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Can short-term missionary service be reconciled with traditional thinking concerning the missionary call, length of service, and the nature of missionary work? And if not, should we be willing to depart from these traditional concepts in order to meet more efficiently the present need?

### The Missionary Call

Everyone is agreed that no one should become a foreign missionary without a call, but here is where agreement ends; few have been able to define the call with any precision. This failure was noted by the Christianity Today reporter to the 1961 missionary convention at Urbana, who wrote, "... a student asked a panel of eight recognized missionary leaders to define a 'missionary call.' For 10 minutes or so the panel talked around the question; none attempted a clear-cut answer."<sup>1</sup>

The aura of mystery surrounding the missionary call is without doubt one of the reasons for the paucity of missionary candidates. If a young person is told he needs a special kind of call before volunteering to be a missionary but is never told what this call is, he will encounter difficulties discerning God's will. Norman Cummings, in an excellent paper on this subject, states that the answer to "What is a Missionary Call?" will determine the caliber and the number of laborers in the spiritual harvest fields of the world.<sup>2</sup>

The popular idea that a missionary call is different from any other call and that a missionary is therefore a special kind of a person is not found in the Scriptures. On the basis of Christ's commission all Christians have been called to the task of world evangelism and thus share equal responsibility. The question to be asked is not so much, "Have I been called?" but "Where and how does God want me to serve?" The response to the challenge of foreign service, either on a short-term or permanent basis, will be proportionate to the ability of the church as a whole to assume its missionary responsibility, realizing that, "essentially, a call to foreign service does not differ from a call to service elsewhere."<sup>3</sup>

### Length of Service

Implicit in our concept of the missionary call is the conviction that a true missionary is only one who dedicates himself for life service. Though a Christian in the homeland might change situations freely, any missionary who leaves the field for reasons other than health or the political situation is forced to carry a certain stigma.

In one manual for missionaries the author mentions that some youth might find short-term service appealing, finding that this service will better equip them for service at home. But he goes on to say,

This book is not written for that type of person. It is written for those who believe they have a clear call of God to missionary service abroad. Quite likely, you were asked a question in your candidate's papers as to whether you intended to offer for life service. In the glow of the consciousness of God's clear call, you were prepared to answer, "Yes."<sup>4</sup>

This idea that a true missionary is one who is called to serve all his life in the same country, or at least in a foreign country, is commonly held, but here again, it is not found in the Scriptures. The apostles moved freely from one country to another, and it would be difficult to say whether Tarsus, Antioch, or Jerusalem meant home for Paul. In our generation it is not unreasonable to suppose that God is calling Christians to engage in certain tasks for a certain period of time on foreign fields and then return home to serve in another ministry. That they are sent for a short-term ministry abroad does not mean that they are not missionaries in the fullest sense of the word.

### Nature of Missionary Service

In spite of the fact that all missions now have in their service numbers of people engaged primarily in secular tasks--construction, bookkeeping, or simply being housewives--the feeling still persists among some that real missionary work is only preaching the gospel or healing the sick. This feeling haunts even some of God's most effective servants on the foreign field, for though they are engaged in necessary tasks they do not fit the traditional missionary image and therefore complexes arise.

In an imaginary interview between a reporter and Paul, the apostle speaks of John Mark and says, "We took him on as a kind of private secretary. He was a help in booking ship passages, arranging lodgings and food, and doing most of our correspondence." To this the reporter replies, "But that's not missionary work. We're interested in real missionaries: street preaching, pioneer work, and that kind of thing."<sup>5</sup>

Because of language and cultural barriers most short-term missionaries will not be doing much preaching and "that kind of thing," but this does not mean that they are not missionaries, sent by God. God's gifts and callings are many, and whereas many are called to preach and teach, the mission field offers other opportunities of service almost as varied as those at home.

Employable on the mission field as short-term missionaries are doctors, nurses, teachers, Bible teachers, journalists, accountants, bookkeepers, stenographers, printers, technicians of all kinds, including X-ray and medical, maintenance men, bookshop managers, literature salesmen, radio engineers, hospital administrators, evangelists. One might say that almost anything that is being done today to earn a living at home may be usefully employed on the mission field.<sup>6</sup>

### A MISSIONARY TASK FORCE

If some of our traditional concepts are not scriptural, this does not mean that they are wrong, and we do not wish to say that they should be abandoned. We have already mentioned that these convictions were born of necessity, and necessity requires that most of them be preserved. Though the missionary call is not essentially different from any other call, it is also true that no one has the right to offer himself for foreign service without a deep sense of God's leading in that direction, for much more is involved in going to a foreign country than in

going from one city to another, and when the going gets rough sometimes the only thing that keeps a missionary on the field is the conviction that God called him there. Though there is no Scripture verse stating that a missionary must offer himself for life, the fact remains that anyone who wants to have a lasting spiritual ministry among a foreign people must devote his life to living with them and learning to know and love them. No mission board should be expected to invest several non-productive years in training a missionary in language and customs only to see him remain home after his first term. Though the mission field offers unlimited opportunities of service, many of them secular in character, let us not forget that any work which does not directly contribute to a spiritual ministry becomes meaningless. Our commission is to preach the gospel.

Traditional concepts will remain, but what we wish to say is that not every missionary should be made to fit the traditional pattern. There will always be need for the conventional missionary, and he will continue to occupy the key position among the foreign workers, but all realize that he is not able to meet the challenge that is before him. Everywhere the cry is the same--not enough missionaries, or missionaries so over-burdened with routine duties that the spiritual offensive suffers. Should we not seek in every way possible to supplement our present missionary force, even if it means laying aside some of our traditional ideas?

It is said that one of the most significant tactical developments during the last war was that of the task force. To the traditional infantryman were added units of engineers, artillery, and other services. Working together for their mutual protection and advancement, each element of a command supplemented the others. The key man was still the infantryman, but it was only through the help of the others working with him that he could devote all his force to penetrating the enemy lines.

Perhaps the short-term missionary is one answer to our missionary shortage which has not been sufficiently exploited. It is not right for the career missionary, proficient in a foreign language and trained through years of experience, to have to spend his time doing the routine work that others could do as well, or better, on a short-term basis. By the addition of well-chosen short-term workers, forming a missionary task force, the career missionary could be freed to give himself more continually "to prayer and to the ministry of the Word." Further, some of the short-term workers will find their way back to the field for life service, with the advantage of having already gained an understanding of the work.

### PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

What has been said thus far is mainly in the realm of the theoretical, and that which works in theory does not always work in practice. When breakdowns do occur, however, it usually does not indicate that the theory was faulty, but that there were problems in its application. A missionary program involving short-term workers will be successful to the extent that sound principles are applied in the selection of the candidates and their integration into the foreign program, and these things must be worked out by each mission board and field council according to the particular problems.

### Selection

Some will object to short-term missionaries on the basis that it will attract too many people who are only interested in a trip abroad with no permanent obligations. This objection is valid to a certain point, but it ignores the fact that along with these, many others will offer themselves with a genuine desire to fulfill Christ's commission. It is up to the mission board by its screening methods to distinguish the good from the bad, a task doubly difficult in view of the fact that many of those who are merely interested in a trip have genuinely convinced themselves that their motives are good.

The selection of short-term missionaries, though on a different basis, should be no less thorough than the selection of those who plan to serve for life, and especially in the areas of spirituality, physical fitness, and emotional stability.

But in addition to general qualifications, it is absolutely essential that the short-term missionary be chosen to fill a specific need, and he be trained in the area where he will serve. Conventional missionaries are often sent to do a task defined no more carefully than preaching the gospel or establishing churches. Their years of language study offer them a period of adjustment during which they can analyze their situation and determine how their gifts will enable them to serve best. Short-term missionaries have no such privilege; they will have to go directly to work upon arrival. They should not be expected to create their jobs.

It is evident that the home board must work hand-in-hand with the field in the appointment of short-term missionaries. Perhaps some fields do not have a need for short-term help, and others will find it more practical to enlist help locally. By all means a candidate for short-term service should not be sent to a field merely because he offers himself, even though he have admirable qualifications.

### Financing

Some will object to short-term workers on the basis that the costs are too heavy in proportion to the benefits received. This objection is based on the faulty supposition that the short-term worker will have to go through the same period of adjustment as other missionaries before he can begin to make an effective contribution, and that by the time he begins to be useful he must come home.

As a matter of fact, it is a false economy which requires the experienced missionary to spend his time doing tasks which could be done by short-term workers were they available. The investment in conventional missionaries is considerable--several years of language training, outfit costs, the necessity of supporting an entire family in a foreign country, to say nothing of medical and retirement obligations.

On the contrary, short-term missionaries are often single and require but an extremely small allowance. Even the investment made in their passage to a foreign country seems less imposing when one compares their total cost to the amount of service they render.

### Coordination

Some will object to short-term workers on the basis that they require too much of the conventional missionary's time, and to be sure, in many instances the presence of extra people would only drain the time and energy of those already over-burdened.

If the wartime task forces proved effective, it was because these diverse forces were united under a single command; mismanagement would have proved disastrous. The element of success was coordination.

Lack of coordination of the various forces on the foreign fields is one of the grave problems in missions. Some mission leaders estimate that missionary output could be doubled without the addition of a single worker by the application of sane management procedures. Yet, among missionaries it is one thing to develop workable strategy and tactics, but quite another to secure the full cooperation of the missionary personnel. Most missionaries are strong individualists; they set their own hours and decide how to use them; they are not subject to the orders of a superior, and no one discharges them if they do not produce.

However, the duties of short-term workers must not only be well-defined, they must also be enforced. These workers must be expected to serve under the direction of the missionaries permanently on the field. They must keep regular hours, and devote themselves faithfully to their work during those hours. In spite of careful screening, some short-term workers will arrive on the field who were not meant to be there and who find it impossible to adjust to the missionary situation. Under those circumstances the field council should be given the liberty, if necessary, to ask the uncooperative worker to return home.

It would be idealistic to say that short-term missionaries are the solution to the personnel shortage felt so keenly on the mission fields of the world, but their presence could greatly alleviate the problem. In view of the scope of the Lord's command, not only comprising the whole world but also addressed to every Christian, it is the duty of each of us, at every period of our lives, to ask our Lord honestly whether we are fulfilling our missionary calling. For a great many now at home, this will some day mean service in a foreign land.

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# FACING THE PROBLEM OF THE MISSIONARIES' CHILDREN

JACK B. CHURCHILL

At a recent conference the following question was put to some missionaries: "Why are some missionaries' children such brats?" Such bluntness provokes reactions. It is not the purpose of this article to assume the role of the missionary parent and defend or excuse. Nor will it be to join in the spirit of the person who asked this question. Our aim will be to direct attention to the over-all problem that this rather tactless question brings up. While no one solution can be given, a frank discussion and some positive suggestions may be of help. One missionary parent, when approached on the subject said, "I cannot give you any of the answers, but I can tell you a lot of the problems."

This article is not being written to arouse undue sympathy for missionaries and their children, nor to increase the height of the "pedestal" that they are often placed upon. More than missionary families are involved here. The pastors and the congregations that support missions have a definite stake in the well-being of their missionary families. Therefore, the purpose here will be to point out some of the particular problems that missionary families face, as parents and children, in the years they are on the field, and to view the complications that develop upon return to the States.

When a missionary couple goes out to the mission field, its witness to Christ and the Christian life is more than that of the two individuals. Something else has been added. It is their joint witness as a Christian family. Here is a place where one and one makes more than two.<sup>1</sup>

These words from the pen of a recognized authority on missions point out the value of Christian family life on the field. In certain areas of the world family ties are very weak according to Biblical standards. A missionary mother in New Guinea describes this when an oil company representative appeared to recruit workers.

Real drama took place at the water's edge during all this . . . I can't see how some of these married men can go off without more than five minutes' thought, to be gone for so long. Three of them have wives expecting babies within a month or less. They do not seem to feel any responsibility toward their families even though they are Christians and love them.<sup>2</sup>

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In some Roman Catholic countries one of the most common criticisms made by the people of their priests is that they are not men who know from personal experience the normal responsibilities and problems of family life. Thus the children in a missionary family are a definite asset in the gaining of confidence among the people and in winning them to Christ.

We have purposely begun this part of the discussion from the positive side. Yet since our purpose is to look at some of the problems, we must turn to them. From the physical standpoint of rearing a family in a foreign land there are usually some aspects of diet and sanitation that take more care and effort than is so in the homeland. Yet for the most part, most missionary homes today can be made as safe as they would be in the States.

Contrary to popular opinion, the greater problems lie in the realm of character formation and discipline. One of these is the training of the children to feel responsibility for work in the home. In some fields all of this type of activity is done by domestic servants, because it is the custom, and because the parents need to be free for missionary work. The children grow up without sharing in the household tasks. This may be carried over into the mission boarding school where again all the menial tasks are done by hired help, because it is cheap and is the custom. The child reared in this atmosphere will very likely contribute to the "brat" image later on.

Another problem not limited to the mission field, yet no doubt heightened by conditions there, is that of responsibility to the home and to the work. The missionary father will find himself a member of a greatly under-manned team, or in a spot where everything depends on him. How can he spend the time he should in the home and in the family? On the other hand, the missionary wife who becomes a mother finds she has to curtail the work she feels she came to the field to do. This can build up frustrations. The following words by a missionary parent are helpful.

The question of whether to put the child or the job first is misleading. If the Lord has given both, and they seem to conflict, commit them both to Him anew. If both cannot be done together, He will give the grace for leaving one or the other as He directs. Not the God-given work, not the God-given child, but God Himself must have priority. If you are one of those to whom He has permitted the joy of caring for both simultaneously, thank Him and pray a little more for those children and parents who must be separated earlier than you and yours have to be.<sup>3</sup>

Another cause for difficulties for the missionary family begins on the field and comes to light upon return to the States. It might be called "totem pole-itis." There may be a sincere effort to live in the foreign country as "your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4:5). Yet the American finds an admiration shown for his gadgets, a deference shown for his ideas and a dependence on his ability and experience. The missionary may fight against it, but he will often find himself and his family the "top-man-on-the-totem." Once back in the States, a very real adjustment must be made. Rather than being at the top, he will no doubt find that he has much to learn.

Without a doubt, one of the most serious problems for missionaries is the education of their children. On the field there are three solutions. The child can go to the local schools if there are any. This allows him to live at home, yet he receives formal instruction in the language and culture of the country. Such a step often encourages better relations between the missionary and the people. Yet each family has to consider the possible disadvantages of an unfavorable moral atmosphere, discrimination where an official religion is taught in the schools, and perhaps inferior academic standards.

A second possibility for schooling is the boarding school. A mission-operated one may have the disadvantage of being small and understaffed. While a school operated by a number of cooperating missions may overcome this problem, it may have to sacrifice doctrinal standards and discipline. In some large foreign cities where there is extensive American commercial investment there may be secular American schools. To send missionary children to them may be academically beneficial, but often spiritually detrimental. In any case, the child will be away from home. He will have the benefit of contact with children of his own background, but he will be experiencing at perhaps too early an age the break-away from his own parents and home.

A third means of schooling on the field is to teach the children at home. One of the finest aids for this is the Calvert Schools system, used widely by the families of American businessmen, government employees and missionaries all over the world. The program is well developed and provides supplies and teaching guides for each day. Disadvantages to be noted are the lack of social contact with other children, the lack of incentive found in group study, and the time required of a missionary parent to teach several children in the family, each in a different grade.

However, the matter of grade school training is handled, it is usually done on the field and in a way that is generally satisfactory. It is when high school age is reached that the real problems develop. A rather extensive quotation from a report on this subject will place the matter before us.

Most missions do not seem to have a firm policy requiring parents to send their children home to the States for all or part of their high school education. The matter is left up to the discretions of the parents in most cases. A number of executives expressed the opinion that children should take the last two years of their high school in the States in order to get better college entrance preparation and also in order to become oriented to life in America before plunging into college work. On the other hand, a number of executives declared that it is best to make this "break" between high school and college, rather than uproot a child, both socially and academically, in the middle of his high school career.

The size of the high school being attended on the mission field would probably have some bearing on this matter. If it were a small school, with limited social and educational opportunity a student might tend to have an



inferiority complex or sense of insecurity when he returned to the States and went immediately into college life.

Some missions which have had a policy of sending their children home for the entire high school education have been faced with the parents contemplating withdrawal from missionary service in order to stay in the homeland for the duration of their children's high school education. Occasionally parents have had to come home prematurely because of problems arising with their children attending high school in the homeland.<sup>4</sup>

Some missions make provision for high school training on the field, and even where this is not done, individual families have kept their children with them, using correspondence courses offered under certain University extension services. Whether the high school age child should be kept on the field or sent home will have to be decided by each family in the light of conditions on the field and in the light of the particular needs of each child.

Sooner or later the missionary family will find itself in the States for a time of furlough. The normal one-year period slips by and a new aspect of the over-all problem must be faced. Should the children of high school age be left in the States. If so, where will they find a home? Should the whole family remain in the States, giving up missionary service on the field? While there has been much misunderstanding of this problem and criticism of the way it has been settled by different families, it is encouraging to know that there has been some serious and prayerful thinking and acting on the part of pastors and church members and mission boards. The missionary should not feel that he is facing this alone.

If the parents feel that they should return to the field there are several possible solutions for the children who are to be left. One that has worked out well in some cases is for the child to be taken into a Christian home and made one of the family circle. Sometimes this will be a relative and sometimes not. In any case the whole arrangement should be carefully talked over. It may be wise in some cases to let the child express his own opinions and be involved in the choice of a home.

Another way to meet this need is through a missionary children's home or a boarding school. These may be mission operated, or private institutions. The advantages are that they are designed for the express purpose of providing a home for the children and the personnel considers this their ministry. However, it is difficult to avoid the institutional atmosphere in such homes, and a child can well suffer psychological effects that would be unwholesome. The homes of this type that succeed best are probably the ones that are kept small with a definite emphasis on family living, and where the children are allowed to attend a near-by public or private school.

A decision that some missionary families have taken is to remain in the States rather than allow the family to break up during the critical years of adolescence. This is a difficult step to take. It involves an interruption in the service on the field where experienced personnel is usually desperately needed. For the missionary it means a more permanent adjustment to life

in the States and a search for employment at an age in life when it may not be too easy to find. The longer the absence from the field the more difficult it will be to return. If a missionary takes such a step without consultation with the staff on the field and the home board, he can disrupt the mission program to a very great extent. Certainly any solution should be sought by all involved and carried out in common agreement.

As mentioned earlier, this complex problem has received some careful consideration. Mission executives, while not anxious to disrupt the smooth flow of any program, are generally very sympathetic. The Foreign Missionary Society of the Brethren Church offers to divide the term of service on the field so that the missionary parents and adolescent children may get together more frequently either on the field or in the homeland. Not all families may feel that this is a solution; yet it has been done with apparent satisfaction in some cases, and the door is open for those who wish to try it.

Another practical suggestion has been spelled out by a missions-minded pastor who has had close hand experience with this problem through having taken missionary children into his home. He and his wife know the situation from the viewpoint of the missionary parent, of the missionary child, and of the home that takes the missionary child in. He believes that the missionary family should look ahead and decide, in consultation with the fellow missionaries and the board, to dedicate one term of their service to remaining in the States. This period would be selected to coincide as nearly as possible with the "crisis years" of adolescence when there is special need of close family ties. Where several children are in the family, one might have to be sent home a year or two ahead of the family. And after this period a younger one who could not be left would go back to the field and return for high school a year or two later.

Several practical advantages lie in this plan. First, the family is kept together, a fact that in the midst of all the discussion has been emphasized as of great importance. The parents can consider that the evangelization and spiritual nurture of their own children is being taken care of by those whom God intended that it should be--the parents. If the missionary takes a pastorate during these five or six years, he will gain some valuable experience for himself and should be able to impart more of a missionary spirit to the church. If it is true that future missionaries come largely from missionary homes, it could well be that the decisive years would be these that are spent together, even though not on the mission field. Problems on the field due to this break in service could be overcome partially by planning ahead, and also by appealing to home churches to supply more candidates for this very need. Many details would have to be worked out, but this plan deserves some careful consideration.

Before closing, the author would like to present another idea. It may create more problems than it seeks to solve. It certainly would not be applicable to all situations and should not be taken as a solution except where there is definite leading from the Lord. This plan has been practiced in some fields, yet the reaction of most would be to reject it.

A family goes to a foreign country with the idea of establishing itself there permanently. The purpose would be distinctly missionary, but the "foreign" aspect would gradually disappear because there would not be the periodic furloughs nor the close tie to the home country. This

would not mean that there might never be a visit to the States, but it would not be the practice. Such a family would have to face the fact that their children would be educated in the country, would be citizens of it, and would quite possibly marry there and rear their families there. If such a suggestion seems unthinkable, consider what changes our Lord involved Himself in when He came to earth. And remember, also, where our citizenship is as Christians.

As stated above, this is a radical suggestion. Perhaps it could not be carried out within the framework of existing foreign mission policy. It would not be possible in every foreign country. Perhaps one of the strongest reasons for presenting this idea lies in the question asked by an Argentine Christian of a missionary parent shortly before the missionary family left for furlough, taking with them an 18 year old son who had grown up in Argentina. "Why do all the missionaries rear their children here in our country where they learn our language and our ways better than their parents do, and then just when they could be of real help in the cause of the Gospel they take them away to the States?" One way to answer such a question would be to encourage the missionary child to keep before him a vision for service in the land he was reared in. Another would be to follow the suggestion given above and never take the child away.

Not all the problems have been touched in this paper. It is hoped that enough has been said to cause many to think more constructively about them. The task of preaching the Gospel to the world belongs to all of us. We should share the problems and seek the answers together. Perhaps as we do, there will be less occasion for anyone to ask why missionaries' children are such "brats."

The preparing of the children of our missionaries so that they can find their proper place in life, and in many cases, in active Christian service is of such vital concern to all that we shall be remiss if we give this problem anything less than our prayerful interests and financial support.<sup>5</sup>

#### DOCUMENTATION

1. Harold Cook, Missionary Life and Work (Moody Press), p. 94.
2. Joyce Brown, "Dear Mom" Letters From a Missionary Daughter (Moody Press, 1960), p. 43.
3. A Missionary Parent, "Do You Pray for M.K.'s?" article in Brethren Missionary Herald (June 3, 1961).
4. Norman L. Cummings, Missionary Children's Schooling Overseas (report), p. 13.
5. Ibid., p. 14.

# CAN THE INDIGENOUS PRINCIPLE BE PRACTICALLY APPLIED?

JACOB P. KLIEVER

The simple phrase, "indigenous principle" has become a complex and a controversial expression that creates a variety of definitions in the minds of the readers. Since this phrase is under such a fog of definitions, the statement of a few New Testament principles of missions should give us a common point of departure for this discussion.

Principle 1--The Gospel is intended for the whole world. Matt. 28:19-20

Principle 2--The Gospel is to be preached to the whole world. Matt. 28:19-20

Principle 3--The Gospel is God's power unto salvation to anyone that believes. Rom. 1:16

Principle 4--Those who believe become new creatures in Christ. 2 Cor. 5:17

Principle 5--Believers are being created in Christ unto good works that have been programmed by God. Eph. 2:10

Principle 6--It is God himself that works in the believers to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. 2:13

Principle 7--All believers are endowed with the same spiritual potential for witnessing. I Cor. 12:11-13

Principle 8--These believers are now "One Body" being fitted together and built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. Eph. 2:16-22

Principle 9--These believers have equal competence as they gather into a group of believers to effect local churches of equal ability, quality and testimony irrespective of their racial, linguistic, geographical or cultural origin. Eph. 2:17-22

Principle 10--Believers are to be trained and equipped for the work of the service of the Church. Eph. 2:12

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We conclude then that it is God's will that the Gospel produce a Church that is indigenous in any part of the world where it is accepted. This is a challenge to missionary faith, the faith that knows that the Gospel is God's power, well able to accomplish the same quality of work in all peoples in all parts of the world.

Racial and cultural pride, class distinctions as well as the pride of geographical origin have ever been a means of testing the Church. The New Testament is not lacking in exhortation concerning this (Gal. 3:26-29; Jas. 2:3-4 etc.). Whether it is done consciously or unconsciously, these are often manifested by missionaries. Their work is very definitely affected by whatever attitude they manifest. This is especially true in Africa today. There are some missionaries who accept and even teach that the "dark" race (even to the point of having only one drop of Negro blood in their veins) is inferior to the rest of the human family. They hold also, that the Negro race is doomed to be subservient to others all of their racial existence. This is supposedly based on the conclusion of those who saw Genesis 9 and related passages as justification to make slaves of the Negro. There are also some missionaries who regard themselves as superior to the people to whom they have come. The Apostle Paul had something to say about that attitude in 1 Cor. 9:19-22. Most missionaries, however, do not count their racial or national origin as any advantage in Christ, and consider themselves as being the servants of all to gain or win them for the Lord. The matter of attitudes is very important because this very definitely determines to what degree the missionary will make a practical application of the indigenous principle.

In discussing the application of this principle in the continent of Africa, it is to be noted that many parts of Africa are now closed to the work of foreign missions. The following statements concerning the practical application of the indigenous principle are from first-hand observance, or from conversations with the missionaries involved. These are proof that the best and the abiding results of missionary work are where there has been a serious and practical application of this method. One of the observations could be classed as a negative proof. It is that as some see that time is running out in Africa, they are now making an all-out attempt to apply the indigenous principle. This is a confession that other methods are not the best. It is sad to note that in some cases it is too late. African political leaders, for the most part, recognize that the application of the indigenous principle has produced the best results among the people. There is another external testimony that might have some merit here. An official of the U.S.A. Embassy made the observation that should the "white" man be asked to leave Africa now, almost all of the work done here by the various European countries and the U.S.A. to help these emerging nations would fold up, but the work done by the mission would remain because the Africans have accepted it, and it has become their own.

It will perhaps be well to clarify what is meant by "practical application" as it applies to the indigenous principle. There have been many varieties of so-called "applications" of the indigenous principle that have not had practical or lasting results. Some have even used these adverse results as arguments that you can have churches that are indigenous and dead. On one extreme you have some that claim to be indigenous when they have some natives as puppets with the missionaries manipulating the controls behind the scenes. On the other hand you have a situation where the missionaries sit, as it were, on the sidelines more or less as spectators

observing an experiment of "hit or miss," "trial and error" or "sink or swim" being enacted by the natives. We come again to the matter of faith in the power of the Gospel. Does the missionary believe that God can do what He has promised with and for the people to whom he has come as a missionary?

The practical application involves teaching and guidance, so that they themselves accept God's Word as their guide and their authority, and that they recognize themselves as directly responsible to God. Then it can be said of them, as it was of the Ethiopian eunuch when the missionary Philip was taken off the scene, "But he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:39). There are no short-cuts; there are certain things that are a "must" in the practical application of the indigenous principle. The people must be convinced that God is their God and not the God of the "whites" being shared with them. They must believe that the Bible is the only true and proven revelation of God's will for man, and that it is His Word for all mankind for all generations. It is God's message to them.

The following are a few of the incidents that were definite encouragements to continue stressing that this was their Gospel. They seemed aware that color was not especially a dividing of races and nations, but they did wonder about the variations of language. It meant a lot to them that God's Word had in it the account of the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel. Paul's message to the Athenians became a basic reference, especially the fact that God had made of one blood all nations of men (Acts 17:26). It is very easy for anyone with animism as his background to incorporate God, Christ and the Holy Spirit as some new-found gods into his system of multiple gods. Whole villages would accept the gospel, but when it was explained that it meant a turning to the true God, forsaking their idols to now serve the living and true God (1 Thess. 1:10), many of them remained on the sidelines for further hearing and observation. There were many who had somehow become sceptical of their old system of idolatry and they accepted the Gospel without reserve. God had prepared their hearts for this. If the early believers here had not had a heart conviction along the lines that have been mentioned above, they could not have accomplished the positive testimony that will be manifested in some of these case histories. These believers became key witnesses in showing forth the power of the gospel. They openly and fearlessly exposed the trickery and the deception of the witch doctors and sorcerers, many of whom were also won to the gospel. For example, Andrew, after having exposed the deception of a witch doctor was told that the water in the divining bowl would become poison to kill him. He asked the witch doctor, "Will it really?," to which the witch doctor replied that it would. Andrew then took the bowl and drank of it in front of all those assembled there! Andrew is today an ordained elder of the church, pastoring a city church; the witch doctor is out of business! At a Saturday evening service, a sharp gasp went up when a rather important looking woman went forward to express her intention of accepting Christ. She asked for time to say something. She revealed that she had been called to the village to divine the cause of the death of so many infants. She exposed how she had become a sorceress, how she had performed, and how she had been practicing deception all this time even though she had no power of divination. She now renounced it all for Christ. She was whipped and she was threatened with death but she clung to her new-found faith.

Local circumstances also called for a practical application of the indigenous principle. If evangelization was to depend on the missionary elders, each one would have from two hundred

and fifty to three hundred villages as his field of operation. It was necessary for the missionary to consider himself as an instrument to train and equip the believers for the work (Eph. 4:12). It was continually pointed out to those in training that this was the Lord's work, and that the engagement to do the Lord's work was between them and the Lord, not between them and the missionary. The missionary, too, was only one of the team. Becoming a worker for the Lord was a personal arrangement with the Lord, and their dependence was upon the Lord for all things. It was also emphasized that it was the Word that was ever the first and the final authority on all important matters and questions. Where the Word was silent on a subject, it could quite safely be classed as a minor question or problem. Instruction was given to help them recognize that there were questions and problems that were personal (affairs of the inside of the house) and those that had to do with the church and its testimony. Most of their personal things they were to work out personally with the Lord. The things relative to the church were best worked out together with the members of the church. This sounds quite simple as to theory, but the application and its outworking helped them to realize that no one lives to himself alone, and that there is a new kind of fellowship in the gospel.

It would have been quite easy for the missionary to plan the expansion of the church, but as it worked out, there were volunteers for opening new points of witness. They saw the Lord's hand in it all, the Lord prepared hearts, the Lord moved them, there was a partnership with the Lord. These workers evangelized, each spotted the strategic points for starting a Church, arranged with the believers desiring to be baptized as to becoming their worker (later their pastor) and the work was established.

After a few years, they were no longer asking, "Do you really believe the Lord can do his complete work through us? Won't we always need to have a missionary around to help us?" As each new responsibility was committed to them or taught them, it was mentioned that they were deemed ready for it, and we now hoped to prepare them for yet other responsibilities. There have been many and real problems for them to solve. Many times they came to us with a report of what happened and how it had been taken care of.

They were submitted to a special and a new test as national independence came into being for them, when the civil government passed from the white man to the African. There were a few newer and younger men that started making a parallel of this with the church. When this was discussed, it came out that the church never had been under the white man (missionary) but that it was the Lord's. There was no change as to the church, for white and African believers could work together under the Lord. Recently a group of missionary elders and African elders were discussing their responsibilities. When the missionaries asked the African elders, "What do you expect of the missionaries?", they replied, "We have been taught how to evangelize, how to pastor a church, how to teach, how to officiate at all the services of the church (communion, baptisms, marriages etc.) but we still have much to learn from you. We want to know how to create and adapt literature for the various church needs, Sunday School quarterlies, etc. We also need guidance and teaching in matters of administration, organization, making of Bible School curricula, etc." They seem to have a clear conception of what they can and will do, and that which they still need to learn so that they can assume the advanced responsibilities. There is also a sincere willingness to learn and then do. The following incident

reveals that they have the right view of the place of the missionary. Pastor John was asked to explain why he was radiating such joy. He replied, "I was just thinking of my brother who is a politician. You know he is absolutely on his own, but we as servants of the Lord have the Holy Spirit to guide and to lead us."

Can the indigenous principle be practically applied? You would receive a resounding "Yes" from the following if they could be given a chance to reply to you: the 44,000 members in more than 250 local churches pastored by their own brethren, of whom over 100 are either ordained or licensed ministers of the gospel. Come to any of our annual District Conferences (about 40 in number) or to our next annual General Conference of all the Brethren Churches (the 9th one). Come visit some of our District Bible Schools taught by our African teachers, or to our Bible Center at Bozoum where the Director and half the faculty are our African brethren. The Medical work and our Bible High School would invite your inspection to check the progress they are making in the application of the indigenous principle. All of these as well as other individuals and groups could provide positive evidence that the practical application of the indigenous principle is according to God's will of taking the Gospel to every creature, and that it produces results that reflect the power of the gospel.



## BOOK REVIEWS

THE ANCHOR BIBLE: GENESIS. By E. A. Speiser. Doubleday and Company, Garden City, N. Y., 1964. LXXVI + 378 pp., \$6.

The author of the first volume of the Anchor Bible is the distinguished Professor of Oriental Studies, Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages, and the Chairman of the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. In the course of his career he has published a list of significant books and articles in learned journals on the languages, literature, archaeology, history and ethnology of the ancient Near East. His work has contributed to the reconstruction of that ancient world in which the events of the Genesis narrative took place, and out of which its personalities arose. He is quite qualified therefore to comment meaningfully on the background of the text, as well as to offer refinements in the translation of the text itself.

A lengthy introduction of seventy-six pages provides, in addition to what one normally expects in an introduction, some notices on grammar, syntax, and idiom that have influenced the translation and interpretation. These are very helpful and reflect the high degree of competence of the author.

In his literary criticism of Genesis, Speiser follows in the main what might be termed the moderate school of documentary analysis, assuming that the book is composed of three sources, J, E, and P. The section in which he sets forth the criteria for distinguishing the different documents offers little if anything new, but merely repeats old

arguments. However, the author maintains that the records of these sources rest on history and were not independent works. They did not originate the stories they relate, but perpetuated a long tradition of spiritual history. The reviewer finds the arguments for the various documents as unconvincing as ever, and feels that the "T" (for tradition) could just as well be symbolized "M" (for Moses).

Speiser clearly observes that the cultural background of the patriarchal stories conforms to the cultural patterns of Mesopotamia in the early second millennium, B.C., and have the stamp of historicity. Unlike some other writers, who suppose the motives for Abraham's migration to be economic, he stresses that Abraham was motivated by spiritual concerns. According to Speiser, Abraham found the Mesopotamian answers to spiritual problems, as set forth in its mythology, unsatisfactory, and embarked on his own search for better answers. Speiser advances beyond many critics in observing that this search is based upon the concept of monotheism. Unhappily, he makes out the monotheistic concept to be the product of Abraham's enquiring mind, rather than the substance of divine revelation.

In the main body of the work, the author treats each portion of the Biblical text (a chapter or a few verses) in three Parts: there is first a translation of the text, followed by series of philological notes and concluded by a few paragraphs of comment.

Many evangelical Christians will find it

difficult to read beyond the first three verses. Speiser translates them as follows: "When God set about to create heaven and earth--the world being then a formless waste, with darkness over the seas and only an awesome wind sweeping over the water-- God said, 'Let there be light.' And there was light."

In fairness, it must be granted that from grammatical and lexical considerations alone, the above translation is possible. From comparative Semitic grammar it is clear that such a construction as the first clause of the Bible might be a temporal clause. That is a possible alternative. Likewise the phrase rûah 'elôhîm may in some cases be translated "awesome wind;" it is a possibility. When alternative translations are equally possible on grammatical and lexical grounds, other considerations must determine the choice. For Dr. Speiser, his background in the religious texts of the ancient Near East seems to have been a deciding factor. But important points in Christian theology could well have led to a quite different translation.

This volume on Genesis, when used with discretion and discrimination, will be a helpful tool in a pastor's or teacher's work.

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THE CROSS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Leon Morris. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1965. 454 pp., \$6.95.

Leon Morris, Principal of Ridley College in Melbourne, Australia, has given to us an exhaustive treatise on the subject of the atonement as contained in the New Testa-

ment. A large portion of the book presents an analysis of the Scriptures throughout the New Testament which have any relevancy to the subject of the atonement. In this development there is a continual interaction with modern views of the atonement which are to some degree or other contradicted by the teaching of the Scriptures. The work is concluded by a penetrating summary which draws the emphases of the Biblical authors into a consistent and unified doctrine of atonement.

The theories of the atonement that have made their appearance during the history of the church fall into three broad groups: those which stress the victory that has been won; those which see satisfaction of some sort as having been offered to the Father; and those which stress the effect on the believer. The error in these theories is not to be found in their concepts of the involvements of the Cross, but rather in the fact that those who hold one theory may deny the truth affirmed by other theories, or distort it out of its scriptural orientation. Morris points out that there is a bewildering variety of ways of looking at Christ's work in the New Testament. All these insights seem to have a measure of truth in them, and none, taken by itself, is adequate. Our understanding of the atonement is always inadequate, not because our minds are not sufficiently profound, but because the sacrificial love revealed in the Cross far outstrips our shrunken appreciation of what love is or can endure.

This treatise is a most significant contribution to the literature on the atonement, and is thoroughly loyal to the Biblical teachings. A careful study of this book leaves one with the awareness of the poverty of much of modern thought, and convinces the reader of the inexhaustible truth that centers in the Cross of Jesus Christ. This concept of

atonement needs to have the same central place in modern preaching as it had in the apostolic preaching and writing.

WILLIAM R. FOSTER  
London College of Bible and Missions

KARL BARTH AND EVANGELICALISM. By Cornelius Van Til. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1964, 33 pp., \$.60, paper.

Because Karl Barth appropriates much of the same terminology used by Orthodox or Evangelical Christianity he is considered by many to belong to this theological camp; Barth even calls himself an Evangelical. To clarify this very problem Dr. Van Til wrote this pamphlet. He asks the question, "Is Karl Barth an Evangelical?" Dr. Van Til proceeds slowly and carefully to answer his own question by a chronological examination of Barth's theological development as revealed by his theological publications over the years.

Dr. Van Til strips off the similitude of terminology and exposes the philosophical import and intent of Barth. He indicates that Barth is, in reality, a universalist. In spite of the fact that Barth claims to emphasize the wrath of God, God's answer to all men is eventually, "Yes." But more basic to the understanding of Barth is his comprehension of redemptive history. He thinks that God's workings in history, as revealed in the Bible, are not to be confused with calendar history. Therefore, while Barth says he believes the virgin birth of Jesus Christ or His resurrection these events are not interpreted to have happened in time or space. This alone should negate any pretension that Barth is an Evangelical Christian.

This is a well written pamphlet worthy of serious consideration. Dr. Van Til has made an important contribution to both the lay person and pastor by assisting them in their evaluation of such an imposing theological figure as Karl Barth.

DWIGHT E. ACOMB  
Dedham, Massachusetts

THE PELICAN HISTORY OF THE CHURCH. Volume three: The Reformation. By Owen Chadwick. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1965. 463 pp., \$5.95.

While fine, old church histories remain in print, there is still a need for fresh ones. The old ones, however excellent, tend to shed insufficient light on the last few centuries, and they of course cannot draw on late research. But for its rather liberal bias, therefore, this series ought to meet a real need.

Of the three volumes (nos. 3, 4, and 5) this reviewer has seen, this on the Reformation appears the best. Drawing upon fresh research, it gives a comprehensive and readable account of the period between 1517 and 1648. The treatment is reasonably objective; in line with the rather ecumenical slant it tries to see both Protestantism and Catholicism in their best lights. The treatment of Luther is brief, of Calvin, briefer. But in contrast, the extended accounts of the English Reformation, the Counter-reformation, and the developments in Eastern Orthodoxy enhance the usefulness of this book.

A work this size has to have some limitations, but at several points the work seems inadequate. While it gives 25 pages to the conquistadors, it dismisses the Great

Migration and the Massachusetts Commonwealth with two paragraphs. It barely mentions the execution of Servetus. It follows the traditional prejudice of lumping the various anabaptist and antipedobaptist groups as if they were all of essentially the same movement.

In sum, this book is well worth owning, whether for its own value or for its place in the set.

ROBERT G. DELNAY

MINISTERS' WIVES. By William Douglas. Harper and Row, Publishers, New York, 1965. 265 pp., \$4.95.

Certainly the author of this book and his staff have to be commended for the many hours of painstaking research and study that went into the content of this book. Upon first glance at this title: Ministers' Wives, one may wonder, well, what about them? And then in the pages to follow one finds out everything about them.

It seems that the author goes about to disprove the old stereotype that ministers' wives all are contented, happy and well-adjusted in their communities and churches. Many letters and surveys were sent to Protestant ministers' wives all over the United States for their candid replies. The response was overwhelming.

The author divides these responses into psychological patterns: Involvement in husbands' work, Motivations, Fulfillments and Frustrations, Ages and Stages, Backgrounds and Situations and Conclusions and Recommendations.

Names used are fictitious but all replies

and "... verbatim quotations from questionnaires and interviews are IBM computer matched, so activity and involvement patterns will represent individual types." The author hoped to go beyond stereotypes to individuality.

Despite the fact that the author asserts these are "pure types" and "patterns of flesh and blood reality rather than theoretical abstractions," in the opinion of the reviewer these studies are not wholly realistic and fail also to give adequate and satisfying counseling in areas of case studies.

For the average minister or wife in his or her casual reading the reviewer found this book inadequate in areas of its clinical research.

MRS. GERALD H. ROOT

Peru, Indiana

J. HUDSON TAYLOR, A BIOGRAPHY. By Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor. Moody Press, Chicago, 1965. 366 pages, \$4.95.

Any account of the life of Hudson Taylor, and God's work through him, will always be a source of rich blessing and encouragement to the one who studies it, and this book is no exception. It is a condensation by Phyllis Thompson, a member of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship, of the larger two volume work on the founder of this mission, then known as the China Inland Mission.

The book traces the life of this man of God in a concise and picturesque style which makes the somewhat lengthy account move quickly. Large use is made of letters and diaries which, though they sometimes prevent smooth transition, add much to the understanding of this man and his faith. If

the biography suffers in any way, it would be in the tendency of the authors to eulogize, presenting an overly favorable picture at times. Nevertheless, the book presents a full, but by no means unduly detailed account of a man whom God was pleased to use in a very singular way in the opening of a great land to the gospel. It is well worth the time of any serious servant of Christ to become acquainted with Hudson Taylor, and thereby to be reminded in a remarkable way of what great things God can do through his prepared vessels in these days.

HENRY BRYANT

Grace Theological Seminary

MIRACLES: YESTERDAY AND TODAY. By Benjamin B. Warfield. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1965. 327 pp., \$2.25.

This is a paperback reprint of Warfield's original work, Counterfeit Miracles, published in 1918. The text actually contains 230 pages, with about 100 pages of annotated, documented footnotes.

He believes that the charismata (spiritual gifts) ceased in the apostolic era because they served as the authentication of the apostles only and were not the permanent possession of the primitive church as such (p. 6). He states that patristic and medieval miracles differed both in character and in doctrinal significance from the Biblical miracles (p. 53) and that they represented an infusion of heathen modes of thought into the church (p. 61). Roman Catholic miracles were also explained as the wholesale adoption of heathen legends and superstitions into the church (p. 82), except for the peculiar cases of stigmatization (p. 84). He attributes the Irvingite gifts to false doctrine and hysteria

(p. 153). He denies that modern faith-healing is of God although he admits that God does heal sovereignly and in answer to prayer (pp. 157-196). He also rejects the Christian Science concept of mind-cure (pp. 196-230).

This book unquestionably has great value in its discussion and historical documentation of the various claims to miracles up to 1918. Unfortunately, it contains no material on movements that have developed since that time. The current charismatic renewal no doubt caused this re-issue of Warfield's original work. The work would have been enhanced if a few chapters on the contemporary phenomena could have been added.

ROBERT GROMACKI

Cedarville College

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS. By Alan Cole. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1965. 188 pp., \$3.25.

This is another excellent volume in the Tyndale Bible Commentaries, edited by R. V. G. Tasker. Cole cautiously accepts the view that the letter was sent to the South Galatian churches after Paul's first missionary journey but before the Council of Jerusalem. He ably develops the theme of the book and gives ample attention to problem passages. Within the book, there is heavy reliance upon Arndt-Gingrich and the New English Bible.

This volume would be an important addition to the library of any Bible student, whether minister or layman.

ROBERT GROMACKI

Cedarville College

## BOOKS RECEIVED

- MY PEOPLE IS THE ENEMY. By William Stringfellow. Doubleday, New York, 1966. 151 pp. \$.95, paper.
- THE ANCHOR BIBLE. PSALMS 11-50. By Mitchell Dahood, S. J. Doubleday & Co., Inc., New York, 1966. 329 pp., \$6.00.
- EFFECTIVE EVANGELISTIC PREACHING. By V. L. Stanfield. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 78 pp., \$2.00.
- A BIBLE INERRANCY PRIMER. By John H. Gerstner. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 63 pp., \$.85, paper.
- EZEKIEL--PROPHECY OF HOPE. By Andrew W. Blackwood, Jr. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 274 pp., \$4.50.
- SPEAKING WITH TONGUES. By Stuart Bergsma. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 26 pp., \$.85, paper.
- THE EPISTLES OF JOHN AND JUDE--A STUDY MANUAL. By Ronald A. Ward. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1965. 102 pp., \$1.50, paper.
- THE WORK OF CHRIST. By G. C. Berkouwer. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 358 pp., \$7.50.
- SERMON SUGGESTIONS IN OUTLINE. By R. E. O. White. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 78 pp., \$1.45, paper.
- THE MARK OF CAIN. By Stuart B. Babbage. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1966. 157 pp., \$1.95, paper.
- THE MYSTERIOUS NUMBERS OF THE HEBREW KINGS. By Edwin R. Thiele. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 232 pp., \$6.00.
- WILDFIRE: CHURCH GROWTH IN KOREA. By Roy E. Shearer. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1966. 242 pp., \$2.95, paper.
- MIRACLES: YESTERDAY AND TODAY. By Benjamin B. Warfield. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 327 pp., \$2.25, paper.
- PERSONAL RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINES. By John E. Gardner. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1966. 134 pp., \$3.00.
- THE MORNING STAR: WYCLIFFE AND THE DAWN OF THE REFORMATION. By G. H. W. Parker. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 248 pp., \$3.75.
- CALVIN'S NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES. THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. Vol. I. Translated by W. J. G. McDonald. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 410 pp., \$6.00.
- THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. By John Murray. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 286 pp., \$5.00.
- REVOLT AGAINST HEAVEN. By Kenneth Hamilton. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965. 193 pp., \$2.45, paper.
- HISTORY OF CHURCH MUSIC. By David P. Appleby. Moody Press, Chicago, 1965. 192 pp., \$3.50.
- THE SUFFERING SAVIOR. By F. W. Krummacker. Moody Press, Chicago, 1947. 444 pp., \$4.95.
- THE FOUR TRANSLATION NEW TESTAMENT. Moody Press, Chicago, 1966., 739 pp.



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## THE GOD-BREATHED SCRIPTURE

The Bauman Memorial Lectures for 1966

at

Grace Theological Seminary and College

by

Edward J. Young

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# SCRIPTURE—GOD-BREATHED AND PROFITABLE

EDWARD J. YOUNG  
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In any study of the nature of Biblical inspiration one naturally turns to 2 Timothy 3:16. The passage is clear cut and constitutes a ringing declaration of the Divine authorship of Scripture. Hence it is easy to understand why this verse is greatly loved by Christians and why they turn to it when they desire again to be reminded that the Book which brings so much blessing to them is a gift of God Himself.

If we turn to this passage, however, a charge may very well be laid against us. It will be said that we are paying attention to the teaching of Scripture at the expense of its phenomena or characteristics. "You listen only to the doctrine which Scripture teaches about itself," so the charge runs, "but you pay no heed to the facts or the phenomena of Scripture. If you would begin your study with the phenomena of the Bible you would obtain a very different picture from that which you receive when you pay attention only to what the Bible says about itself." This charge is often raised in our day against those who are concerned to defend the full and complete authority of Scripture. It is, of course, not a recent charge. It was made even in the days of Benjamin B. Warfield, and he regarded it necessary even in his day to refute it.

At first glance, it might appear that there is some justification for the position that the teaching of the Bible and its phenomena are to be placed upon a par each with the other, and that the phenomena of Scripture should be just as regulative of an acceptable doctrine of Scripture as the express teaching thereof. A little reflection, however, should make clear how untenable and unjustified such a position really is.

On the airplane I fall into conversation with the man in the seat next to me. He introduces himself as a Mr. Smith from New York, and tells me that he is on his way to San Francisco. Why should I not accept his testimony to himself? Normally, we assume that a person is telling the truth unless there be convincing reason to the contrary. But, for the sake of the argument, I am unwilling to accept Mr. Smith's testimony. For one thing he speaks with a Southern accent; again I notice that the last initial on his briefcase is not S, but B, and finally I happen to note that he holds an airline ticket between New York and Chicago, not between New York and San Francisco. I have been studying the "phenomena" of Mr. Smith and from them conclude that he is not from New York, nor is he on his way to San Francisco, nor for that matter is his name Smith. Prudence, however, dictates that I keep my findings to myself. But I am quite convinced that a study of the "phenomena" has given me the truth about Mr. Smith or whatever his name is, and I am sure that I have been far more scientific and scholarly in my procedure than a poor extreme fundamentalist who naively accepts Mr. Smith's words at

face value. A study of the phenomena has contradicted the testimony of Mr. Smith. His statements about himself are not to be trusted. The "phenomena" have disproved them. It is a comfortable feeling to be so up to date.

As our flight progresses, however, Mr. Smith speaks further. I learn that he has only lived in New York for three years, but that he was born in Georgia. He shows me pictures of his birthplace and tells me that he has recently visited it. There was, it seems, a family reunion, and there is Mr. Smith in the midst of it. There are photographs of himself, and these bear his name. The mystery is beginning to clear. As we talk I learn that he is meeting a friend in Chicago and that the two of them plan to make a leisurely business trip from Chicago to San Francisco. Furthermore, I learn that the briefcase belongs not to Mr. Smith but to the friend, and that Mr. Smith is carrying it to Chicago to give to his friend.

Thus, my study of the "phenomena," interesting and "objective" as it was, led to wholly wrong conclusions. And the reason why it led to such wrong conclusions was that I did not know enough to judge the "phenomena" correctly. By my study of the "phenomena" I had concluded that Mr. Smith was not telling the truth, and this was an utterly unjustified procedure. By my study of the "phenomena" I did Mr. Smith a grave injustice.

It may be well to note that certain assumptions underlie the position that man by a study of the phenomena of Scripture is capable of passing judgment upon these phenomena and so upon Scripture itself. And the fundamental assumption, often uncritically adopted, is that the mind of man, without the assistance of divine revelation, can make pronouncements as to whether certain parts of the Bible are from God or not. Even the study of textual questions can only be ultimately fruitful if it be based upon theistic presuppositions. And a philosophy of error can only have meaning if it be grounded upon the truth. Man of himself does not know enough to assert that there are errors in Scripture. If we assume that we may set ourselves up as judges of the Bible, what we are in reality doing is declaring ourselves wiser than God. Scripture speaks of itself as "God-breathed;" we assert that we know enough to belie its claim.

And this brings us to the heart of the matter. The idea that a study of the phenomena of Scripture as opposed to mere acceptance of the teaching of Scripture can bring us to a true view of the Bible leads inevitably to the conclusion that the teaching of the Bible concerning itself is in error and must be corrected. It produces the conclusion that the Bible is at bottom wrong about itself, and that we must revise its teaching on this point. This can hardly be regarded as a satisfactory conclusion, for if Scripture is fundamentally mistaken about itself, how do we know that it is correct in anything else that it teaches? The Bible asserts that it is "God-breathed," but we have checked up on it and we find that that characterization will not apply. The Bible has deceived us in telling us about itself, and our study of the phenomena has compelled us to modify the teaching which the Bible gives us as to its own nature. Such is the sad conclusion to which one must inevitably come if he engages in a study of the "phenomena" of the Bible instead of willingly accepting the Bible's claims concerning itself.

There is of course a proper method of examining the "phenomena" of Scripture and that is to study them in the light of Scripture's doctrine of itself. If we do this we shall see that the so-called phenomena, when properly interpreted, simply support the doctrine of Scripture about itself. It is this procedure which devout exegetes and apologists are constantly

engaged in. It is a procedure which leads one to see how the phenomena of the Bible are to be understood and how they really support the claims of Scripture. We are far from being opposed to a study of the Scriptural phenomena, but we insist that such study must build upon a right foundation. To build upon a wrong foundation, as so many do, can lead only to a rejection of Scripture's doctrine about itself. The result is a Bible that is untrustworthy as a teacher of doctrine.

### The Structure of 2 Timothy 3:16

We make no apology, therefore, for turning to the teaching of Scripture, and when we know what this teaching is we can in its light examine the Scriptural phenomena to our heart's content. Our attention at present, however, is to be limited to one particular passage, which has often been studied. There is, however, need for a reconsideration of this passage, for it has recently become the object of strange interpretations.

The King James Version renders 2 Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The English Revised Version gives: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." A footnote, however, suggests the reading as an alternative, "Every scripture is inspired of God, and profitable . . ." The American Standard Version is the same as the English even to the point of giving an identical footnote. The Revised Standard Version is closer to the King James, "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." The New English Bible gives, "Every inspired scripture has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, or for reformation of manners and discipline in right living." The New American Standard Bible renders, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness." To this translation there are three interesting marginal notes appended; 1. "Or possibly, Every Scripture inspired by God is also . . .;" 2. "Lit., God-breathed;" 3. "Lit., "training which is in . . ."

Perhaps it will not be out of place to note a few more translations. Phillips gives, "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the faith and correcting error, for re-setting the direction of a man's life and training him in good living." Weymouth has: "Every Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in right doing." The version authorized by the Hierarchy of England and Wales and the Hierarchy of Scotland renders: "Everything in the Scripture has been divinely inspired, and has its uses; to instruct us, to expose our errors, to correct our faults, to educate us in holy living." Goodspeed, in the American translation, gives, "All Scripture is divinely inspired, and useful in teaching, in reproof, in correcting faults, and in training in uprightness." Lastly, we may note the rendering of the Berkeley version, "All Scripture is inspired of God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness."

Here, indeed, is considerable variety in translation. At the same time, it is interesting to note that each of these translations uses the English word "scripture." None of them

renders the word graphē as "writing," but each is apparently convinced that the apostle is speaking of Scripture. It will be well then to examine the grammatical structure of the verse somewhat carefully in order that we may more clearly understand what it is that Paul asserts concerning the Scripture.

The first question which calls for attention revolves about the point whether theopneustos is an attributive adjective modifying graphē or whether it is a predicative adjective. In other words, is Paul saying, "All Scripture inspired of God is also profitable," or is his meaning, "All Scripture is inspired of God and is also profitable." Of the translations given above we may note that the English Revised Version, the American Standard Version, and the New English Bible take theopneustos as an attributive adjective, although the two revisions do offer footnotes in which the word is construed as a predicative. The New English Bible is very free.<sup>1</sup>

If the word kai be omitted from the text then it would seem that theopneustos is to be construed as an attributive; although we might in that case expect it to precede the noun. In that case the text might be translated, "All inspired Scripture is profitable." Luther seems to have taken it in this sense, "all Scripture inspired by God is." But is there good textual warrant for thus omitting the conjunction? Kai is lacking in the Syriac<sup>2</sup> and in some of the Church Fathers. Nestle does not mention any manuscripts in which it is missing. Textual evidence then would argue for the presence of kai and there is no sufficient reason for not retaining it.

Now, it is the presence of this word kai which renders difficult the construction of theopneustos as an attributive, for if theopneustos is an attributive then kai must be rendered in English as "also." The whole must then be translated, "All scripture inspired of God is also profitable," or conceivably, if kai be given ascensive sense, "All scripture inspired of God is even profitable." It cannot be denied that these translations create difficulty for they appear to be saying something that is practically pointless. Why (to note the ascensive use of kai) should Paul say that all inspired Scripture is even profitable? Is not the word "even" superfluous? What does it contribute to the thought? Is not the simple declaration "All Scripture inspired of God is profitable" far stronger and more effective than the statement "All scripture inspired of God is even profitable"?

Suppose, however, we give to the word kai the force of "also" which is what we really must do if we regard theopneustos as a predicate. Does not the sentence then become somewhat pointless?<sup>3</sup> "Also" suggests an addition to something just mentioned. If Scripture is "also profitable," in addition to what else is Scripture profitable? Paul might conceivably have said "All Scripture inspired of God is holy and also profitable." This would yield good sense, but merely to assert that "Scripture is also profitable" is really pointless. For these reasons we feel compelled to construe theopneustos as a predicative adjective. Paul is then making two assertions concerning the Scripture. In the first place he declares that Scripture is theopneustos and secondly that it is profitable.

The question now arises whether we should render the introductory words, "every Scripture" or "all Scripture." And in seeking to answer this question we must also ask in what sense the word graphē is to be understood? Does it refer to individual passages of the Scrip-



ture, as when our Lord says, "Today is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21), or does it refer to the entirety of Scripture? The preceding verse, in which Paul is speaking of the "holy Scriptures," would seem to show that he here has in mind all Scripture. Yet one cannot be dogmatic upon this point. If Paul has in mind each individual passage of Scripture he is then considering the Scripture distributively. He is then saying in effect that whatever passage of Scripture one consider, that Scripture is inspired of God. If, on the other hand, as is more likely, it is all Scripture of which he speaks, he is then declaring that the entirety of Scripture is inspired of God. The definite article is missing and this is a factor which would argue in favor of 'every.' At the same time this consideration is not decisive, for there are cases where pas is used without the definite article and the meaning 'every' is not acceptable.

Happily, it does not essentially affect the thought. In either case Paul is asserting the inspiration of the Scripture. Whether we consider Scripture piece by piece or whether we look at it in its entirety the Scripture is inspired by God and it is profitable. These two predicates apply to all that can be denominated "Scripture."

### God-Breathed and Profitable Scripture

It is necessary now to consider the two predicates which Paul attributes to the Scriptures. In the first place we have the word theopneustos about which there is much discussion. Since the learned studies of the late Benjamin B. Warfield, however, there can be little serious question as to the actual meaning of the word.<sup>4</sup> To say that Scripture is theopneustos is to assert that it is God-breathed. This, of course, is not universally acknowledged. The recent lexicon of Bauer, translated into English by Arndt and Gingrich merely gives the translation, "inspired by God," and shows no evidence of having used Warfield's work. This is truly disappointing, for it is misleading.

The word "inspiration" has entered the English language, it would seem, through the French, and ultimately derives from the Latin. In Latin the infinitive spirare means "to breathe" or "to blow." From this basic meaning there are certain connotations, such as, for example, the usage in Horace, quod spiro, et placeo, si placeo, tuum est, where the word seems to mean "to be poetically inspired." In combination with the preposition "in," the infinitive means "to breathe into," and it is precisely this thought which the English word "inspiration" denotes.

To speak of the inspiration of the Bible then, is to speak of a book into which something has been breathed or, if we wish to make the genitive subjective, a book which breathes something into someone else. Let us examine these two views briefly. If the phrase, the inspiration of the Bible designates inspiration which the Bible produces in others, it is tantamount to saying that the Bible is an inspiring book. The Bible, on this view, in one way or another inspires men. This, of course, is true, the Bible does inspire men as perhaps nothing else can do or has done. There is much that can be said about the inspiration which men have received from the Bible.

Suppose, however, that in the phrase, "the inspiration of the Bible," the genitive is objective? This would mean that the Bible is a body of writings into which something had been

breathed. Some quality of divinity, we may suppose, had been breathed by God into these writings which rendered them distinct from other writings. On this interpretation of the phrase, we are apparently to understand that the Scriptures are writings produced by men just as other writings are, but that somehow God breathed into them something which renders them different. These are the alternatives which appear to be open to us if we render the word theopneustos by "inspiration."

Which of these alternatives should we adopt? The answer is that we should adopt neither, for the word "inspiration" does not accurately represent Paul's thought. That the Arndt-Gingrich lexicon should so cavalierly treat the subject is a disservice to those who may use the lexicon. There is no point in repeating or in rehearsing the arguments which Dr. Warfield has adduced to support the correct meaning of the word, but we may confidently assert that the word means "God-breathed," and this is something quite different from what is meant by the English word "inspiration."

Paul is not asserting that Scripture is inspiring, true as that may be, nor is he declaring that something has been breathed into Scripture. What he is saying is something quite different; what Paul is maintaining is that the Scripture itself is God-breathed. That which God breathed forth from His mouth is Scripture. To put the matter in slightly different terms, Scripture is the Word, which God has spoken, the product of the Divine breath.

What Paul is declaring is the Divine origin of Scripture. Some apparently think that there is no need to make such an assertion at this point, but it is precisely this truth which undergirds the following truth, namely, that all Scripture is profitable. If the Bible is not divine, then we cannot be sure that all of it is profitable.

We must, however, examine this thought of the Divine origin of Scripture more closely. In Genesis 1:3 God said, "Let there be light," and these words originated in the Divine mouth. They were spoken of God, and it is just this thought which Paul is expressing to Timothy. By way of illustration we may also note the preface to the Ten Commandments, "And God spoke all these words saying." Here the commandments are clearly attributed to God as their author. He spoke them, and it is in this divine speaking that they found their origin.

Isaiah uses a phrase--indeed it is a characteristic of his prophecy, which sets forth the same truth, "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." We might go on through the Old Testament, pointing out how in passage after passage the content of Scripture is attributed to God's speech.

How different Paul's emphasis is from much that is stressed today! At the present time there is much stress placed upon the so-called human side of the Bible. It is being asserted, for example, that if one is to understand a passage of Scripture, he must know the life situation in which the events recorded arose. This is to concentrate attention upon the human side. Little is said today about Scripture as a Divine revelation, and that little often presents a faulty picture of revelation.

As over against this modern emphasis the great Apostle turns all his attention to what modern man would minimize, namely, the divine origin of Scripture. Having once established

this point he can go on, but this point must be established: All Scripture is God-breathed, the product of the Divine breath, issuing from the mouth of God Himself.

Having ascertained the meaning of Paul's first predicate, we may proceed to notice the second. All too often discussion restricts itself to the word theopneustos with the result that the profound truth expressed by the second predicate is either neglected or minimized. Not only is the Scripture God-breathed, but it is also ophelimos which may be translated "profitable, useful, advantageous." The usage of the verb opheleō is well known, as is also that of the noun opheleia.

When Paul asks (Rom. 3:1) "What is the use of circumcision?" he simply means, "How can circumcision aid or benefit you?" And so in this present passage he is speaking of the fact that the Scripture brings benefit or profit to those who read it. Doubtless the second predicate stands as a consequence to the first, and it would not be incorrect to reason, "Inasmuch as Scripture is God-breathed, it is also profitable." The usefulness of the Bible, in other words, derives from the fact that it is the Word of God. Were that not the case, it would be just an ordinary human book, whose usefulness could well be questioned.

What is now particularly significant to note is Paul's affirmative that all Scripture is profitable. The implications of this assertion are often overlooked or ignored but they are of far-reaching significance. The predicate which Paul employs, like the first predicate, applies to the entirety of Scripture. There is nothing which can rightly be designated Scripture which is not also profitable in the respects stated in this verse.

This truth strikes hard at the practical use which many of us make of the Bible. Our reading and study of Scripture, all too often, is merely piece-meal. We have favorite passages which we read over and over again, but large portions of the Scriptures are neglected by us. Although we may pay lip-service to the teaching of Paul we do not carry it out into practice.

Far more serious, however, is another aspect of the question. It is one thing in practice to neglect certain portions of Scripture. That is bad. Far worse, however, is it when we deliberately assert that not all of Scripture is profitable. Question has been raised, for example, with respect to the book of Esther: Why is the book of Esther in the canon? Did God place it in the canon in order to teach divine providence, or inasmuch as they find it in the canon, and the question of its canonicity seems to be somewhat of a dead letter nowadays, do Christians simply assert that because the book teaches divine providence, it therefore has a right to a place in the canon? Recently Professor Dewey Beegle has suggested that both Jeremiah and Ezekiel quite clearly teach the fact of God's providential care and asks whether it is "--really necessary, therefore, to contend for the unique inspiration of every word of Esther?"<sup>5</sup>

This type of objection requires comment with respect to several points, which we shall consider in a practical, if not necessarily a logical order. In the first place, there is the question of canonicity, and this question is not immediately germane to our purpose. That which determines the canonicity of a book is the fact that it is God-breathed. If a book is the Word of God, it is ipso facto canonical. In the course of the collection of the canonical books questions have naturally arisen concerning some books, and Esther is one of these. But is not

the fact that the debate about Esther has largely died down an argument in favor of the book's inclusion in the canon?

We are fully aware of the difficulties involved in the Scriptural doctrine of the canon and have sought to discuss them elsewhere. But we believe that the church has been right in placing its approval upon this book and accepting it as a portion of the Old Testament. Despite the rabbinical discussions concerning this book, there is no sufficient warrant for not believing that when our Lord placed His approval upon the Old Testament canon of His day, the book of Esther was included in that canon.

The question of the canon is not the immediate point involved, however. What is involved is simply whether all Scripture is profitable or not. It is sometimes assumed that, if all Scripture is profitable, we should therefore at a glance be able to tell precisely how this is so. Professor Beegle mentions certain passages which he calls Trivialities. Among these are listed the "Shibboleth" incident of Judges 12:5, 6; the case of Ibzan, Judges 12:8-10; and Abdon, Judges 12:14. Are not these mere trivialities which have no particular value for us today? Apparently Professor Beegle would answer this question in the affirmative, and doubtless others would agree with him.<sup>6</sup>

It is well to notice, however, that the human mind, apart from God's revelation, is in no position to judge as to whether each particular passage of Scripture is profitable or not. God has declared that all Scripture is profitable. Shall we believe Him or not? This is the heart of the issue. Who is to decide whether Scripture in its entirety is for our profit? This is a question which man alone cannot resolve. Professor Beegle might restrict his questions to a few passages such as those mentioned above. There are others, however, who are not as concerned about Christ's work as is Professor Beegle, and they would not hesitate to enlarge greatly the list of passages which are to be dismissed as supposedly non-profitable.

The position of faith is the only possible position for the man who wishes to be true to his Lord. To deny that all Scripture is profitable is to deny that God has spoken the truth. We are not called upon to point out in what respect every passage of the Bible is profitable for us any more than we are required to give a final interpretation of every verse of the Bible or a final explanation of every difficulty in Scripture.

A man might conceivably list every verse of the Bible which he did not fully understand and then reject it as of little or no profit. "If we do not understand something," it might be argued, "how shall we benefit from it?" If we were to follow this procedure, it would mean the casting aside of a great deal of Scripture. Yet few would want to engage in a procedure such as this. Why then should we regard as unprofitable or why should we deny profitability to certain passages of Scripture on the grounds that we do not see how such passages can be of profit?

There is one point about the Shibboleth incident that is deserving of notice in this connection. The Ephraimites had grossly insulted the Gileadites and were severely beaten in battle. The Gileadites then took the fords of the Jordan to cut off the Ephraimites' retreat and, if possible, to prevent their return to their homes. Inasmuch as the Gileadites had control of the river they tested each man who sought to cross to discover whether he was an Ephraimite

or not. Apparently the Ephraimites were unable to pronounce "sh," and so, when the word "Shibboleth" was set before them, they pronounced "sibboleth" instead, thus giving themselves away. The result was that during the war some 42,000 of the Ephraimites fell.

That the Ephraimites pronounced "sh" like "s" is quite interesting, but the incident is instructive also. It simply is illustrative of the difficulty which the people of God had in establishing themselves in the land of promise. The great lesson which God's people at that time had to learn--indeed, the lesson which they need at all times to learn--is that the promise of salvation is to be received as a gift of grace and not a reward of merit. To obtain the promise the people of God are not to employ the wisdom of the world. More specifically, to establish themselves in the holy land, the people were not to employ the methods and practices of the world. When Jephthah had appealed to the Ephraimites to fight against the Ammonites, for some reason they did not heed that appeal. They had no warrant, as far as we can tell, for rising against the Gileadites, and now their actions rebound upon them. "They that live by the sword shall die by the sword." The Shibboleth incident resulted in a great destruction for the Ephraimites.

Ephraim had used worldly wisdom--or at least she had not relied upon God, and her actions had backfired. She had not become a blessing to those round about her; she acted as the people of the covenant should not act. Her reliance was not placed in the promises of God but in herself. Her defiance and haughtiness toward Gilead were anything but becoming to the chosen people. Hence, she suffered, and the Shibboleth incident is the mark of her ignominious defeat.

Without this episode at the crossing we should not realize the disgrace that fell at that time upon Ephraim. In the total picture the incident has its place, and it is a significant place. Like many other details it goes to fill out the picture and contributes its share toward making clear that at that time the covenant people had not learned their need wholly to trust in their God.

This Shibboleth incident contributes to our understanding of the period and thus plays its part in making clear that the events recorded in the Old Testament are historical. Here there is further evidence that we are dealing with historical matters. This is an emphasis sorely needed at present when men are seeking to retain the content of Christianity and yet divorce it from its historical roots.

Perhaps we may not be able in every instance to discern wherein Scripture is profitable. Further study on our part, however, will clear up many difficulties. May our lives be devoted to the study of the Scriptures for they in their entirety are God-breathed and they are profitable.

## DOCUMENTATION

1. This translation rests upon the text pasa graphē theopneustos ophelimos, etc. R. V. G. Tasker: The Greek New Testament, Oxford, Cambridge, 1964.
2. We may transliterate: kul k<sup>e</sup>tob dab<sup>e</sup>ruho' 'etk<sup>e</sup>teb, maut<sup>e</sup>rona' (h)w etc.
3. Huther seems to suggest that kai is confirmative. On this view it would be rendered "indeed" or something similar. Cf. J. E. Huther: Critical and Exegetical Handbook of the Epistles of St. Paul, in Meyer's Commentary. Edinburgh, MDCCCLXXXI, p. 307.
4. Benjamin B. Warfield: "God-inspired Scripture" in The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, Philadelphia, 1948, pp. 245-296.
5. Dewey M. Beegle: The Inspiration of Scripture. Philadelphia, 1963, p. 93.
6. Op. cit., p. 88.

# WHAT IS GOD-BREATHED SCRIPTURE?

EDWARD J. YOUNG

In our last lecture we sought to show, upon the basis of an exposition of 2 Timothy 3:16, that all Scripture is both God-breathed and profitable. The teaching of the verse is so clear that there would seem to be little reason for question. What Timothy teaches is beyond dispute. Why, then, are not all Christian people willing to agree upon the clear and simple teaching of the epistle? Why do even evangelicals sometimes refuse to come to grips with what the Bible so plainly asserts respecting itself? Why do some insist that there are errors in the Bible, still maintaining that the phenomena of the Scriptures alone must guide us in accepting a proper view?

## The Original Copies of Scripture

Perhaps one answer to the above questions may be found in the fact that in the copies of the Scriptures now in our possession there are minor errors, and hence, it is assumed, these errors were probably also in the original copies. There are men who refuse to accept the position that in the original copies (the so-called autographa) of the Bible we have works that are entirely free from error. All too often, it is asserted that an appeal to the originals is really a flight from reality. We do not have these originals, so the argument runs; how then do we know that they are errorless? How can we say of them that they are infallible and inerrant? An appeal to the originals is too often discarded as being unworthy of consideration.

Nevertheless, we must consider the originals. Of course, it is true that we today do not possess these autographa; it is perfectly true that we have not seen them nor has any living man seen them. Does it therefore follow that an appeal to them is merely a way out of the difficulty? The present copies of the Bible do contain errors, we must acknowledge, and so we appeal to the originals which we have never seen. Is not this merely an escape from difficulty? It might seem that such were indeed the case; that is, at first sight it might appear to be so, until we begin to investigate the question more closely. And as an introduction to the question we may well consider again the language of Paul to Timothy.

When Paul makes his double statement about all Scripture, what Scripture precisely does he have in mind? When he declares that all Scripture is God-breathed and that it is profitable, of what Scripture is he speaking? Is he referring to the copies of the Bible that were extant in his day or is he referring to the autographa? In the little work to which we have already made reference, Professor Beegle asserts that the extant manuscripts of Scripture were regarded as being the same as the originals because the attribute of theopneustos applied permanently to them. Paul, he tells us, "--probably never thought in terms of the technical distinction between

the autographs and copies of Scripture" (*op. cit.*, p. 29). Nor does Paul, we are told, make any special claims for or characterize the originals in such a way as would set them apart from the copies of the Bible that were extant in his own day. No explicit statements in the New Testament, we are told, single out the autographs as being different from the copies of the Bible which the church of Paul's day knew. Nor does the New Testament anywhere teach that copies of the Scriptures are not inspired. In one passage, Professor Beegle explicitly states that Paul was thinking in terms of the extant manuscripts, namely, 2 Timothy 3:16.<sup>1</sup>

We are grateful to Professor Beegle for thus setting the issue clearly before us. His words require considerable comment and cannot be dismissed offhand. Basically, then, the question that is often raised may be stated as follows: "When Paul wrote 2 Timothy 3:16, he was thinking of the copies of the Bible then extant, and so what he wrote concerning the Scripture applies to those copies."

In the first place, we must be cautious when we speak of what may have been in Paul's mind when he wrote. We do not know what was in his mind except as we have the Scriptures. As he wrote, he was borne of the Holy Spirit. The whole question of the mode of the divine outbreathing of Scripture is one that is filled with mystery. How far the human penman of Scripture may have understood what he was writing is a matter that we cannot assert with positiveness. How much he may have been conscious of divine superintendence is again a matter upon which we cannot speak. The whole subject is fraught with mystery. We do not actually know what was in the mind of Paul when he wrote. We certainly do not know all that was in his mind. How he actually came to express in writing the majestic thoughts which are found in his epistles is something into which we cannot probe.

We simply have the Scripture before us. To assume that Paul may have been aware of all the implications of what he wrote is not warranted. We can but examine and study the Scripture itself, knowing that its ultimate author is the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity. Our question therefore must be reformulated. We must not ask, for we are unable to answer, "Did Paul in writing to Timothy have in mind the autographa or the extant copies of Scripture? Was he thinking of the originals of the Bible or of the copies that were present in his day?" We must rather ask, "Does 2 Timothy 3:16 refer to copies of the Bible which were extant at the time of writing or does it refer to the autographa?" If the question be formulated in this way we shall at least be able to approach an answer. Whether even this formulation does justice to the matter is a question that can only be decided upon the exegesis of the passage in question.

Approaching the subject in this way we then ask whether the passage in Timothy has reference to the autographa or to extant copies of the Bible. A mere glance at the verse makes clear that Paul is speaking generally of the Scripture. This is the Scripture which is able to make one wise unto salvation. In the verse under consideration he makes no explicit distinction between autographa and extant copies. That point is obvious and can hardly be disputed. Paul says however that the Scripture is God-breathed, and in so doing is making a statement which has to do with the origin of Scripture. This point is often overlooked. It seems to be overlooked in Professor Beegle's discussion of the passage. Professor Beegle constantly speaks of the "inspiration" of the Scripture, but, as we have sought to point out in the previous lecture, the word "inspiration" is not a satisfactory word to render into English the Greek word theopneustos.



What we must insist upon is that in using this word theopneustos, Paul is making a statement about the origin of the Bible. How did the Bible come into existence? The answer to this question, according to Paul, is that the Bible is God-breathed. It is the use of this very word upon the part of Paul which compels us to look more closely into the matter. Can it be said that the copies of the Bible extant in Paul's day were God-breathed? Obviously this cannot have been said of them. Assuming that Paul's primary emphasis is upon the Old Testament, we may well ask whether any of the Hebrew Bibles which were found in the Jerusalem of Paul's day were God-breathed. Of course, they were not. In those days one would have found copies of the Hebrew Old Testament written on scrolls which were kept in the synagogues. It would have been possible both in Jerusalem and in Rome, from where Paul wrote to Timothy, to have entered the synagogue and to have examined these rolls. If one were to ask the rabbis concerning the origin of these scrolls, quite possibly one would be told the name of the scribe who had copied the scroll. The scroll would have been a copy made from a former copy and that in turn would have been copied from one previously existing. To say that these scrolls were God-breathed would be to assert what was not the truth. In Paul's day there was not a single copy of the Old Testament of which it could be said that it was God-breathed.

In our previous lecture we sought to show what the true meaning of this Greek word was. It is a word that is in perfect keeping with such expressions in the Old Testament as "the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." In the very nature of the case then, this word refers to the origin of the Scriptures. The Scripture finds its origin in God and not in man. It is not a product of human composition, but was breathed forth by God Himself. When therefore, Paul says that Scripture is God-breathed the meaning is that the origin of the Bible is to be found in an act of God. He breathed forth the words of the Scriptures, and therefore, this word can only apply to the autographa. It certainly does not apply to extant copies of the Bible and to maintain that it does is simply to betray an ignorance of the Greek language.

The appeal to the autographa therefore does not owe its existence to a desire to escape from difficulties that are present in the extant copies of the Bible. It is Paul himself who speaks of the origin of the Bible, and we are led by his words to a consideration thereof. The predicate theopneustos, (God-breathed), we must insist, does not have reference to extant copies of the Scriptures. It characterizes the origin of the Bible, and in the very nature of the case, unless we wish to deprive language of all meaning, refers to the autographa.

The force of this fact may become clearer by means of an illustration. Suppose that a man says, "I believe that the Bible is a revelation from God." His language is general and what he says about the Bible is true. We begin, however, to examine in greater detail the force of his statement. Is he speaking about the autographa or about the King James Version that he holds in his hand? In his declaration perhaps these alternatives were not in view. He is making a general statement about Scripture. We begin to examine his statement. When we say that the Bible is a revelation from God we are asserting that the Bible was revealed to us by God. Now, there can hardly be any question about the King James Version of the Bible. Despite the respect that many of us have for that version, we are not willing to say that it was revealed to us by God. That is not its origin at all, and to insist that it is, is to betray a woe-ful ignorance of the facts of the origin of Scripture. When one says therefore that the Bible is a revelation from God he is saying that God revealed the words of the Bible to man, and in the very nature of the case is referring to the autographa. The statement, "The Bible is a revelation

from God," is a general declaration about the Bible. It is perfectly true. When, however, we begin to ask the question, "In what sense is the Bible a revelation," we are brought face to face with the autographa.

So it is also with Paul's utterance in 2 Timothy 3:16. What Paul here declares is a general declaration about the Bible. When, however, we begin to ask in what sense Paul's words are true, we are brought face to face with the autographa. The Scriptures are truly God-breathed, but it was the first copies of the Bible that came directly from the divine mouth. These copies alone were given to us by God. Paul is talking about the origin of the Bible and to force his language to refer to something else is to do an injustice to that language.

### The Profitable Scripture

It is often asserted at the present time that we can have all the blessings of the Christian faith without an inerrant original. Therefore, so the conclusion seems to be, an inerrant original is not very important, for God did not deem it necessary to preserve it for our benefit. The Bibles which we have are errant, and yet we are blessed through their message. Inerrancy then, we are told, is not so very important after all. God has been willing to permit the work of His kingdom to be carried on with an errant Bible. Again, we must turn to 2 Timothy for help in considering this question. Paul here makes the statement that "all Scripture is profitable." And again the question may be raised: Is Paul speaking of the copies of the Scripture extant in his day or is he speaking of the original? And again we must insist that this question is really beside the point. Paul is simply making a general truthful declaration about the Bible. He tells us that the whole Bible is profitable. When we hear his words we again ask, "In what sense is this statement true?" When we ask this question we realize that this assertion of Paul's has to do with a quality of Scripture and not with its origin. When Paul had said that "all Scripture is God-breathed" he was asserting something concerning the origin of the Scripture, and in the nature of the case could only have been referring to the autographa. When, however, he tells us that all Scripture is profitable, he is making a general characterization of Scripture. Scripture, wherever it may be found, is profitable, or, to put the matter in a slightly different fashion, "Whatever is Scripture is profitable."

Does this statement refer to the extant copies of the Bible? Our answer is, "It most certainly does insofar as these copies are Scripture." If there are copyist's errors in the extant copies of the Bible, obviously these errors are not Scripture. Let us illustrate by means of an extreme example. Suppose, for some reason, I decide to copy out by hand the book of Exodus. That would be quite an undertaking and quite difficult. In copying I find that I become quite tired. Exodus is a long book, and unfortunately I make some mistakes. When I am copying out the eighth commandment, for example, inadvertently, I omit the negative. Instead of copying the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," my copy reads, "Thou shalt steal." This unfortunate error is not Scripture. The words "thou shalt steal," whatever else may be said about them, are not profitable to anyone. Hence, we must say, that the present copies of the Bible are profitable, insofar as they are Scripture. If there are copyist's or other errors in them, we must seek by means of the science of textual criticism to correct these errors. Error, in the nature of the case, cannot be profitable. It is the Scripture which is profitable, and Scripture cannot be confined to any one copy or to copies written in any one language.

When we say that the Scripture is profitable, what is meant is that the truth which the words of Scripture expresses, is profitable. It is for this reason, that the science of textual criticism is so important and that the science of translation is equally if not more significant. What we need is to know precisely what it is that God said to man. To know this we must engage in translation.

Perhaps it is not out of place to stress the fact that competent translation is one of the most important tasks of the serious Bible student as it is also one of the great needs of the day. And the reason why it is so important is that translation attempts to place in our own language the very thoughts of the original. The competent translator seeks not to impose upon the original his own thoughts nor merely to paraphrase the original but rather to say in his own language precisely what is found in the original.

Hence we see the importance of maintaining the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Bible, for it is only through the words of Scripture that the truths of Scripture may be conveyed. At first sight it might seem, and indeed there are those who tell us that such is the case, that the really important thing is not the words of the Bible after all, but rather the truths which the Bible teaches. "If we have these truths," so the argument seems to run, "we have the message which God wanted us to have, and that is the crucial thing." And coupled with such assertions one often finds a warning against the sin of Bibliolatry.

Truth, however, must be conveyed in words if there is to be an effective and lasting communication. We cannot really have the truth of the Bible or its teachings unless these things find expression in words. The divorce between the message of the Scripture and the words in which that message is couched is largely an illusory one. If we destroy the words of the Bible we simply do not have its message. It is important that we have the words of God in order that we have the Word of God. Indeed, without the one we do not have the other, for the two are really one. The words which God has spoken to us are His message, His Word.

Hence, in the nature of the case it should appear that only the words which God spoke are of profit to us today. And the loving care which has been expended by so many upon the text of the Bible is really an evidence of the fact that those who expend this care realize how all important it is that we have the very words of God. With the copies of the Bible extant sufficient of the original has been preserved so that we have the message of God. That, however, which is profitable is Scripture, and if we are to receive profit we must have the Scripture.

#### Difficulties and the Profitableness of the Bible

There are those who point to some of the difficulties found in the present copies of the Bible and who go on to make the assumption that those difficulties were found in the autographa and so are actually part of the inspired Bible. They then come to the conclusion that a Bible which contains errors, which is errant and not infallible may nevertheless be a Bible that exists for our profit. We have already considered this question somewhat, but it is now necessary to examine it a bit more closely.

In his interesting work on The Inspiration of the Bible, Professor Beegle adduces certain of the difficulties which a study of Scriptural phenomena presents, and concludes that the doctrine of an inerrant Scripture has not faced up to these difficulties.<sup>2</sup> Professor Beegle mentions several problems, some of which the present lecturer has discussed elsewhere. Before we proceed to consider the relationship that the phenomena of Scripture sustain to the question of Scripture's profitableness, we must note that it is not incumbent upon us to answer every difficulty in the Bible, and furthermore, if we are not able to give an answer or a solution to every conceivable difficulty, we have no right to conclude that there must be a genuine error present.

Among the difficulties which Professor Beegle discusses are the following: Jude 14, Jude 9, The Reign of Pekah, the Reign of Hezekiah, Genesis 5, Acts 7:4, the speech of Stephen, Acts 7:15, 16, Galatians 3:17 and Mark 14:30, 72, and 1 Corinthians 3:19. This is an imposing list. These questions have been studied over and over again and it cannot be said that they have been satisfactorily answered. But there is no warrant for asserting that there were actual errors found in the autographa. If we knew all that was to be known about these difficulties we should be more restrained in declaring that the Scripture is errant.

Our present concern, however, is with the question of the profitability of the Scripture, and it is in this connection that we shall consider the remarks which Professor Beegle makes on Genesis 5. In Genesis 5 there is obviously present a certain pattern. The genealogy of man is traced from Adam through the three sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. We are told that a certain man lived so many years and then begat a son, then it is stated how long this particular man lived after his begetting the son and there is added the statement, "and he begat sons and daughters." Finally the total years of the man's life is given together with the statement "and he died," the notable exception of course being Enoch. On the basis of this chapter Archbishop Ussher, as is well known, reckoned the date of the creation to be 4004 B.C.

Today, of course, we know that the earth is older than 4004 B.C. and so we reject the chronology which was given by Ussher. But what about the one who wrote down the fifth chapter of Genesis? Professor Beegle asks some pertinent questions. If the writer merely wished to highlight the main men in the pre-Flood world, why did he give the three numbers for each man named; i.e. age at birth of the son, years lived after the birth of the son and then the total number of years? Evidently the writer intended these figures to be interpreted literally. Many believers, before the discoveries of geology, thought that the purpose of the genealogy in Genesis 5 was to provide a chronology, and they accepted that chronology at face value.

Evangelicals today, however, have come up with the interpretation which sees in the genealogy merely a genealogy and not a chronology. They believe that there are gaps in the lists and hence they simply do not any longer regard the chapter as presenting chronological information. Most decisively they reject Archbishop Ussher's chronology. What, however, about the original intention of the writer? The writer intended the passage to be chronological, whereas we today, because of the modern discoveries in the scientific field, impute to the passage another meaning. Because we have obtained new scientific knowledge, we, according to Professor Beegle's charge, ignore the clear meaning of the passage. We cannot accommodate the intent of the Biblical writer to the scientific knowledge which is our possession today. And, we may add in passing, if this is really the situation which faces us, what becomes of the

profitability of Scripture? If this fifth chapter of Genesis cannot agree with that which is actual fact, then how can we say that all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness? In particular is it difficult to understand how this chapter can be of instruction in righteousness if it is out of harmony with what we today know to be true.

This question must be carefully faced. Is Paul correct when he says that "all Scripture is . . . profitable?" Genesis 5 is Scripture, but if it is basically in error and presents a wrong view of reality or if it even leads or compels us to accept a wrong view of reality, then, how can we say that it is profitable? In the first place, we may say by way of answer, we have no way of knowing what may have been in the mind of the human writer of this portion of the Bible when he composed Genesis 5. We simply do not know whether he intended it to be chronological or not. Suppose that Moses did compose this chapter having used other previously existing written documents to aid him. Suppose, too, that he was acquainted with the cuneiform accounts of the longevity of kings before the flood. When Moses arranged the fifth chapter of Genesis, how do we know what was in his mind? He nowhere states that his intention was to give either a chronological or a nonchronological account.

By way of illustration we may ask what was in the mind of the composer of the prediluvian king lists which the cuneiform documents have preserved for us. Is there any possible way to tell? He must be a bold man indeed who would claim to be able to answer such a question. Nor are we able to tell what the intention of the human writer of Genesis 5 was. More important, however, is the fact that the ultimate author of Genesis 5 is God Himself. Was the Lord seeking at this point to teach us that the names of Genesis 5 were necessarily chronological and that only such an interpretation does them justice? These are the questions which we must face.

It is perfectly true that believers regarded the chapter as teaching chronology and that they held this opinion for years. It is also true, as far as the present lecturer knows that what caused a shift in interpretation was the discovery that the earth is presumably older than 4004 B.C. There can be no question but that this caused interpreters to take another look at the chapter. And we can certainly be grateful for anything that causes us to take another look at the Bible. We must constantly be willing to submit our interpretations to the Scriptures themselves to be tested thereby. This is not interpreting the Bible by science as some would put it. But natural revelation can often be of aid in enabling us rightly to understand the Scripture.

An example may be in point. For years students of the Bible believed that the true Mt. Sinai was the Jebel Musa, found in the present Sinai peninsula. The mountain is majestic, and fits the description that is given in the book of Exodus. It is quite possible, however, that in view of recent studies upon the topography of the Arabian peninsula, particularly of the wilderness of Zin, that we may now have to look elsewhere for a location of the mountain. It may turn out, after all, that Mt. Sinai is not in the Sinai peninsula, but in the Arabian desert to the east. In the opinion of the present speaker, the question cannot yet be settled with definiteness. Here, however, is an example where a study of the geography of the land is an aid in the understanding of the text of the Bible.

It is often the case that we read the Bible with closed eyes. For years men read the epistle to the Galatians but apparently could see nothing in it incongruous with a religion of works righteousness. Finally, however, God raised up a monk who read the epistle to the Galatians with his own eyes and the Reformation was born. And so it may be with the fifth chapter of Genesis. For years men may have read this with their eyes closed, merely accepting what others had said. Tradition can be a very powerful thing and there was not much reason why any should break from tradition. It needed, in this one instance at least, something to jar men out of their misinterpretation to take another look at the chapter. If science was responsible for this, we may indeed be grateful.

Did the fifth chapter of Genesis, however, in any sense deceive men? Was it written in such a way as to lead men to embrace a wrong interpretation or might it simply be that men did not notice the chapter as carefully as they might have done? We believe that the latter is the case. God has not deceived men, for the Scripture, being His Word, is infallible; it neither deceives nor is it itself deceived.

It will be well to examine the content of the chapter somewhat carefully, in order to discover whether it does intend to teach a chronology. First of all, we note that there are ten names from Adam to Noah. Inasmuch as ten is a number similarly employed elsewhere in Genesis it is quite possible that this very fact would point toward a definite schematization. The same number appears again in the genealogy in chapter ten, and also there are ten sections of generations in the composition of the book of Genesis.

Throughout the chapter emphasis also falls upon the number of years that a man lived until he begat a descendant. This appears to be important. It must be noted that a general statement is also made, that each one also begat sons and daughters. From the birth of the first descendant to the phrase, "And he begat sons and daughters," it is said that the patriarch in question lived so many years. Now it would seem to be very unlikely that the text meant that he begat sons and daughters all at once. In fact such an interpretation is definitely excluded. For example, Seth lived one hundred and five years and begat Enos. After the begetting of Enos he lived eight hundred and seven years and begat sons and daughters. The total number of years of his life, however, is nine hundred twelve, or one hundred and five plus eight hundred and seven. Having lived nine hundred and twelve years Seth died. Are we to assume that in one year he begat sons and daughters and that this was also the year of his death? Obviously such an interpretation does not satisfy the requirements of the text. The text itself requires us to interpret that Seth lived one hundred and five years and then begat Enos. With respect to the begetting of the other sons and daughters, however, it would seem that this occurred over a period of eight hundred and seven years, or, to put it differently, throughout the remainder of Seth's life. What stands out from this then is that a great distinction is made between the notice of the birth of the first-born and the notice of the birth of other sons and daughters. Emphasis falls upon the first-born in each instance. What is the reason for this?

With each of the patriarchs also, apart from Enoch, there occurs the statement, "and he died." These words sound like a refrain calling to mind the assurance of the serpent, "ye shall not die." Into this continuous reign of death there is interjected the declaration concerning Enoch, "and he was not, for God took him." Death appears to have sovereign control over

the destiny of the human race, but its control is only apparent. Here in the line of promise, death's wide reign is interrupted, and Enoch escapes death, because of God's intervention. God is mindful of His promise, and shows to a world under the universal power of death that He is the God of life, and that the promise of life is greater than the power of death.

It is very difficult to escape the conclusion, wholly apart from any considerations of science, that Moses has given to us here a schematic arrangement. This seems to be supported by the number ten. That Seth was the actual son of Adam appears from 4:25, and that Enos was the son of Seth appears also from 4:26. Furthermore, it would seem that Noah is the actual son of Lamech. Both at the beginning of the genealogy and at its conclusion the actual son of a father is mentioned. Whether, however, this continued to be the case with each patriarch is open to question. Inasmuch as this is a schematic arrangement it may very well be that in some cases, we are to understand that the patriarch lived so many years and begat the line that culminated in the one who is mentioned as his son. This, of course, is a perfectly legitimate usage of the word "son." If this interpretation is correct, then it is clear that not everyone in the line of descent is mentioned. That the arrangement is schematic appears also in that Enoch the seventh in the line is taken by God. The verb laqah which is here used of Enoch is suitable to express the thought that God had translated him, i.e., had taken him from this earthly existence into the heavenly existence to be with Himself. In the Babylonian list of ante-diluvian kings we may note also that it is the seventh king who is carried away to be with the gods and to share in their secrets. Furthermore, it is the tenth in the Babylonian list who is the hero of the Flood. These correspondences do not mean that the list in Genesis derives from the Babylonian list. What they mean is that the truth was handed down among the Babylonians also and that what they have preserved for us in their lists is simply a garbled version of what had once taken place. In the fifth chapter of Genesis, however, we have the truth which in corrupted form comes to light in the cuneiform documents.

It is also to the point to ask what the purpose of Genesis 5 really is. Is the writer here setting before us as his primary purpose the giving of a chronology which will enable us to add up the figures and so come to an understanding of the age of the earth? That hardly seems to be the purpose at all. Rather, a close reading of the chapter would seem to show that what the writer wishes to convey is that even during the line of promise death exercised its universal, almost unrestrained reign. When we compare the list in chapter five with the list of the Cainites in chapter four we notice that there the schematic arrangement is completely lacking. In this line emphasis falls upon certain members of the sons of Cain and the purpose is quite different from that which is found in chapter five. The actual line of descent is given in quite hasty terms, "And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech" (Genesis 4:18). Moses, as it were, rapidly passes over the genealogy in order that he may show the rapid growth and increase of sin in the world and draw the reader's attention to Lamech's song of hatred. Among the descendants of the first murderer, sin grew rapidly; it became more and more heinous. Whereas Cain looked to the Lord to defend him Lamech boastfully declared that he could take care of himself. Wick-edness characterized the line of Cain.

Even among the line of Seth there was death, and Moses' purpose is to show that, although the patriarchs belonged to the line of promise, nevertheless, with the exception of Enoch, they yet were subject to death. Nowhere, however, does the writer make the figures



of this chapter the basis for a chronology. It would seem that the purpose of the chapter is not to teach chronology.

How then is this Scripture profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness? There are several lessons which stand out and which could at all times have been learned from the chapter. Devout believers who have read this chapter, no matter the age in which they lived, could see from this chapter that, even though death reached its powerful hand over those who were in the line of promise, nevertheless, God has not forgotten His promise, and the light of life breaks through to take Enoch from death's almost universal sway. Then, too, and this is certainly one of the most fundamental lessons to be learned, death, great and powerful as it was, never intervened until the patriarch in question had begotten the son through whom the promise of life was to be carried on. Death, in every instance was too late. When it came and claimed the life of the patriarch, he had already begotten the line of promise. Hence, when Noah is born, Lamech, not to be identified with the Lamech of chapter four, could say, "This same shall comfort us concerning our work, and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed" (Genesis 5:29). The promise of salvation was not nullified. Through Noah the line of redemption was to be continued.

These great lessons stand out for all to learn. Suppose, however, that some godly men misunderstood the figures in the chapter, and like Ussher, used them to determine the age of the earth. That does not mean that the chapter is of no profit; it simply means that some aspects of it were misunderstood. For the central message of the chapter lies not in the numbers, but in the lessons which are taught. If some men took the numbers as giving a chronology and overlooked the obvious schematic character of the chapter, that does not mean that the Scripture was of no profit; but merely that they misunderstood one aspect of it. And it must be confessed that those who did this were mistaken, yet even this mistake was based upon a desire to be faithful to the Scriptures. They misused the Scriptures, so we believe, but the error which they made did not lead to great harm. If a man happens to believe that the earth was created in 4004 B.C., we think that he is in error and that he is guilty of poor exegesis. On the other hand, we do not think that his study of Genesis 5 need necessarily be without profit. He used the numbers of the chapter to form a chronology, and that we think is unwarranted, for it is going beyond the Bible.

Today we believe that a more accurate interpretation of the chapter is, as we have said, to regard it as containing a scheme, and we insist that in so regarding it we are not doing violence to the true nature of the chapter. Genesis 5 is Scripture, and it requires our serious study and exegesis, just as do all parts of the Bible. Inasmuch as it is Scripture, however, it is profitable, as Paul says that it is.

We are far from denying that there are serious difficulties in the Bible. The study of these difficulties is the work of the exegete, and those who write serious commentaries on the books of the Bible engage in the study of these difficulties and in an endeavor to resolve them, if, with our present knowledge, that is possible.

But we insist that these difficulties are not evidence that there is actual error in the original manuscripts of Scripture. If there is error in the Scripture, then all Scripture is not



profitable. Paul says that all Scripture is profitable, and consequently, there is no error therein. The case is as simple as that. As believers, we may safely accept Paul's word.

## DOCUMENTATION

1. Dewey M. Beegle. The Inspiration of Scripture. Philadelphia, 1963, p. 73.
2. Op. cit., pp. 41-69.

# THE BIBLE AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

EDWARD J. YOUNG

The question with which we are to concern ourselves in this lecture is the relationship of the Bible to the Christian faith. Our purpose will not be to discuss that question in great detail or fulness for in one lecture such a procedure would manifestly be impossible. For that matter it will not be possible even to consider every aspect of the question. What we are principally to be concerned with is whether the Bible is really important for our Christian faith or whether we can be good Christians even if we did not have the Bible.

At first sight such a question might seem almost irrelevant or flippant. Of course, we must have the Bible, one is tempted to retort, who would deny that? On closer examination, however, we find that there are those who do in effect deny that the Bible is really essential to Christianity. There are many who so depreciate the Scriptures that when they have finished, one wonders just what use the Scriptures do serve. At any rate, it is necessary that we devote some attention to this all important question.

## An Evangelical Testimony

Before we proceed further it may be well to consider what one of the great creeds of Christendom has to say concerning the importance of the Scriptures for faith. We shall turn to the Westminster Confession. In the first chapter we read: "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word; and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed" (I:VI.). This is a strong statement, and also, unlike many modern attempts to state doctrine, it is a clear statement. One knows just what the Confession is talking about.

According to the Confession there is a counsel of God on certain very important matters. That means that God has given to man His will and design concerning these subjects. Where, however, are we to find this counsel of God? Not in the "mind of the church" according to the Confession. Nor do we find it in the individual local churches. Indeed, we do not find it in man at all. We find it rather in a Book, and that Book is the Bible. Furthermore

God's whole counsel is set down in Scripture, according to the Confession. This counsel of God is said to embrace "all things necessary" for God's glory, man's salvation, faith and life. In other words, if man is to glorify God he will find in the Scripture all that is necessary for him to know of God's counsel on the subject. If he is to live aright, knowing what he is to believe and how he is to act, again he must turn to the Scriptures, and there he will find all things that are necessary in order that he may have salvation, faith and life.

In the Scriptures, then, there is a final revelation from God upon these vital subjects, and inasmuch as this revelation of God's counsel is final, no additions to it are to be made. Even if someone or some group, such as a church body, should think that they have new revelations from the Spirit, they are not to add these to the Scriptures. These new revelations are not revelations at all; they come not from God; they are not part of His counsel, and they are to be rejected. They are not to be added to the Scriptures. To say that such a position regards the Scriptures as of supreme importance is to put the matter mildly.

In the first section of the first chapter of the Confession we are told that the Holy Scriptures are most necessary, and the reason given for this is that God's former ways of revelation have ceased, and these must be written down and preserved in writing. All God's revelations of Old Testament times have ceased and so in order that the truth might be the better preserved, these had to be committed wholly unto writing. Again, we are told of the importance of the Holy Scriptures.

According to the Westminster Confession, then, we may say that if we are to live a Christian life, we must learn from the Bible how we are to do so. The Bible tells us the duty which God requires of us, and without the Bible we simply cannot live the life that God would have us live. Our own ideas as to what is right and what is wrong are not sufficient. Our minds are darkened by sin, and what we think is right, all too often is wrong. We need the light of God's truth in order that we do not go astray. There can be no Christian life that is not based upon the truth revealed unto us in the Bible.

Likewise, we simply cannot have the Christian religion without the Bible. The Bible tells us what we are to believe about God, and apart from the revelation of the Bible, we shall simply fall into gross error. The entire content of the Christian Faith, in other words, is derived from the Bible. Conceivably the content of the Christian religion could have been handed down from generation to generation by means of oral tradition alone. This, however, is exceedingly questionable. Tradition very soon becomes corrupted, and unless there had been special supernatural preservation, it is very questionable that we today might have any Christian faith at all. At any rate, tradition has not been the means whereby the Christian religion has been handed down to us. To learn what Christianity is, we must turn to the Scriptures. Their importance cannot be over-emphasized.

#### A Modern Apologetic

To say that modern theologians disagree with what has just been stated, is to put it mildly. In one way after another the significance and importance of the Bible is minimized. We shall consider in some detail one particular modern attempt to defend Christianity at the

expense of the Scriptures. The Bampton Lectures for 1962 were given by Alan Richardson, Professor of Christian Theology in the University of Nottingham, and these have now been published under the title, History Sacred and Profane.<sup>1</sup>

These lectures are very learned and very worth while reading. They present, among other things, a survey of much modern literature on the subject of history and history writing, and they offer a cogent refutation of the view of history espoused by Barth and others of the neo-orthodox school. Richardson has done good service here. He clearly rejects the distinction which so often is made today between the realms of Historie and Geschichte, and disallows any defense of Christianity along such lines. His own defense of Christianity, however, we believe, is also fallacious, but it is worthy of some consideration in connection with the question which forms the subject of our own lecture.

Richardson approaches the question of the resurrection of Christ. What kind of evidence, he asks, would lead one to the conclusion that the resurrection of Christ was an event of history? Richardson is very emphatic as to what he means. In speaking of history he stresses that he means ordinary history and not some eschatological realm of sacred history. There are two conditions he thinks, which would have to be met. In the first place, there must be the credible attestation of witnesses to the event which could not be more satisfactorily accounted for on some other hypothesis. In other words, there should be the testimony of eye-witnesses to the empty tomb, so that we cannot account for the empty tomb more satisfactorily on the basis of some other hypothesis. The testimony of the eyewitnesses, in other words, would compel us to conclude that the empty tomb could only be explained because Jesus rose from the dead. Secondly, according to Dr. Richardson, the event to which attestation is given would have to be in accord with the deepest understanding of life and its experience on the part of the historian. Our view of the witnesses' credibility will be determined very largely by our own attitude toward life, and hence, we are told, these two conditions are really bound up together.

Richardson then proceeds to consider the question of the attestation by reliable witnesses to the resurrection of our Lord. There were, of course, no witnesses of the actual act of resurrection and emergence from the tomb. There were, however, those who saw the risen Christ and heard and believed His words. Under the influence of the form criticism of the day, which is having such a baneful influence in New Testament studies, our author declares that the resurrection narratives at the conclusion of each of the canonical Gospels are not to be regarded as the factual accounts of eyewitnesses. Rather, these resurrection narratives are today to be regarded as the outcome of a long period of growth in the tradition. Their great importance is that they show how the sub-apostolic church presented or recited its belief in Christ's resurrection as an historical event.

At this point it is necessary to interrupt the line of Dr. Richardson's thought in order to express most decisively our dissent from this appraisal of the resurrection narratives. This is not the place in which to engage in a defense of the historicity of these narratives. The work of the late Dr. N. B. Stonehouse stands out as a mighty protest against and critique of the form-critical approach to the Gospels. If these chapters are regarded merely as witnesses to the faith of the early church, we are still faced with the question how the early church came to profess such a faith, and to this question the form critical approach has given no satisfactory

answer. We regard these resurrection narratives, found at the conclusion of each one of the four Gospels as an historical account of that which actually did transpire. They were either the work of eyewitnesses who had seen the risen Christ or of those who had had contact with such eyewitnesses.

Having rejected the Gospel accounts as unhistorical, Dr. Richardson is then led to assert that the primary evidence for the resurrection of Christ from the dead is the early Resurrection faith. It is ". . . the emergence of the faith which carried the news about Jesus far beyond the boundaries of Judea and Galilee and within a few decades had brought into being communities of people, who shared a new and distinctive quality of fellowship and life, in almost every city in the Roman world and in the lands beyond its eastern limits."<sup>2</sup> How did this faith arise, for an historical explanation of its arising must be found. This problem cannot be avoided nor shirked by the historian, for it cries aloud for a solution. What gave rise to the Easter faith? To declare that there is no explanation is to be untrue to historical method. We must ask how such a faith became alive and how the Christian Church grew and wielded such a tremendous influence in the history of the world.

To these questions, we are told, there are three lines of answer. In the first place, there is the answer of the New Testament itself. This answer is not based upon one or two isolated statements, but permeates the whole. The early faith was not faith in the teachings of Jesus but faith in the Christ who rose from the dead. Throughout the New Testament the resurrection of Jesus Christ is represented as a recent event of history. Indeed the very Christian community came into being for the express purpose of witnessing to the world that Jesus had risen from the dead. According to Dr. Richardson this is a satisfying historical account of the origin of the Christian Church and its distinctive faith. It is satisfying because it gives, he tells us, a rational historical explanation of the evidence that is available. It would seem then that the only possible interpretation of the evidence was that Christ had risen from the dead, as He said. The resurrection created the Church by calling faith into being.

On purely critical grounds alone, we are told, this is a satisfying explanation and provides a rational historical explanation of the available evidence. The question is not, however, one of interpreting the evidence on a strictly historical basis, for history is more than criticism, and there is the factor of the historian's judgment. If all other considerations apart from interpreting the evidence upon a strictly historical critical basis were ruled out, then one would have to judge (historically speaking) that the resurrection of Christ brought about the existence of the Christian Church. There are, however, interpretive concepts in the mind of the historian and these come at this point powerfully into play.

Richardson appeals to a reflection of Carl Becker, in which Becker declares that the historian, when confronted with some out-of-the-ordinary event to which attestation is made by many credible witnesses, will declare that the event is not possible and that the witnesses are self-deceived. Becker points out that this is the way we expect such historians to react, for, he says, they have their prejudices and presuppositions. They would find it easier to believe that any number of witnesses were self-deceived than to believe the strange and unusual event to which these witnesses give testimony. Richardson appreciates and accepts this estimate of the situation. "'The conflict of opinion,' from which Acton thought it necessary to rescue 'facts,' is the very stuff of history, for history in practice consists in a kind of ongoing Socratic

dialogue concerning what is the right judgment of the evidence, that is, a dialogue concerning the 'facts,'" <sup>3</sup>

The final judgment of the historian, we are told, will, in the last analysis, depend upon the kind of man that he is. Because the historian possesses what Becker calls certain "settled convictions as to the nature of man and the world" he makes the judgments and appraisals that he does. Inasmuch as he is what he is, he judges as he does. In the writing of history detachment is an illusion.

Acts of faith, however, according to Richardson, are not determined solely by the climate of opinion of any given age, for there are always several climates of opinion and these are valid until they change. The climate of opinion found within the Christian church, for example, has its roots in the past. Men may be changed from other climates of opinion to this one; they become converted, begotten by the great mercy of God to a new and living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. If then the historian is to accept the resurrection of Jesus Christ as an historical event he must free himself of his prejudices and preconceived ideas that such a resurrection could not have happened. Indeed, he would need to possess faith.

A second explanation of the empty tomb is that the message of the resurrection of Christ was deliberately fraudulent. To believe that the Christian church and all the blessing which it has brought into the world is based upon a deliberate fraud, is, however, impossible to accept. We always reject the greater miracle, said Hume.

The third explanation of the empty tomb is that the early Christian witnesses, even though they were sincere men, were nevertheless mistaken in what they believed. Richardson very rightly rejects any such explanation.

#### An Evaluation of Dr. Richardson's Position

We have set forth Dr. Richardson's position in some detail in order that we may evaluate it the more fairly. We are grateful for his rejection of certain explanations of the empty tomb, explanations which in reality do not explain. What, however, can be said about his own position? At first glance, it would seem that if this interpretation which Dr. Richardson has presented is correct, then the Bible is not really essential to Christian faith. It is true that there must be found some explanation for the faith of the early Christian church, and it is also true that the only explanation of that faith is the historical fact that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, did rise from the dead by a mighty miracle. Can we, however, say that our reason for believing in the resurrection of Christ is simply the widespread faith of the early Christian community? Before we begin to make an evaluation of this position we should notice that our information concerning the resurrection comes, on this position, simply by word of mouth. There were witnesses of the risen Christ, we may assume, and these witnesses convinced others that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. As a result, the faith in the resurrection became quite widespread. That faith has continued down to the present day and we today say that we believe in the resurrection because the Church has always so believed. We are willing, in other words, to accept the resurrection upon the testimony of early

witnesses, and we think that the only explanation of the testimony of these witnesses is that Jesus Christ did rise from the dead. Their testimony, in other words, does rest upon fact. They were not deceived.

Now this remains true whether that testimony be committed to writing or not. If these witnesses or some who had known them did write down their account of the early resurrection faith of the church, then the written accounts may be very interesting as illustrative documents, but they are not necessary to convince us of the resurrection. At the most they play rather a secondary position. We believe the resurrection, not because of the Bible, but simply because there is a testimony found in the Christian church, and this testimony was evidently quite early. If we believe that the early witnesses were trustworthy men, then we may say that this testimony goes back to those who had seen the Lord after His passion. What is all important, whether we like it or not, is the unbroken testimony of the church. Conceivably Scripture might corroborate this oral testimony, but that is really the extent of its functions. It really plays a very secondary role.

We may wish to escape this conclusion, but if the apologetic which Dr. Richardson so ably presents is true, then it simply follows that the Bible does not occupy an essential position in the church. We could really dispense with the resurrection narratives, for we have the oral reports and the resultant faith of the church. It is difficult to perceive how this conclusion can be avoided.

Is Dr. Richardson's apologetic, however, satisfactory? When we speak of the resurrection faith of the early church can we simply say that this faith must be explained and that the only way to explain it is by the assumption of an historical resurrection? If we do that, what, after all, have we accomplished? Let us suppose that shortly after the death upon the cross of our Lord, there were those who believed that they had seen the Lord again in the flesh. Let us suppose furthermore that these were honorable men; they were disillusioned and not expecting to see their Lord again. Something surely happened to change their disillusionment into joy and hope, and we firmly believe that what happened was that Christ had risen from the dead.

Now, at this point, we must press further into the matter. Suppose that Peter, for example, had thought that he saw Christ after Christ's death. He was an honest man, and, to make sure that he was not deceiving himself, would have gone to the tomb to discover whether or not it was empty. Had he found the tomb empty, he might have been convinced that Christ had appeared to him. And there would have had to be an explanation from Christ as to what had happened. In other words, there was need for special, propositional divine revelation in order that man might know the truth of what had taken place.

It cannot be too strongly pointed out that the mere fact of an empty tomb is not sufficient. The unbeliever of today is quite sophisticated, and he is likely to tell us, and he has told us, that in this strange open world all things are possible. Just as it is possible that, given enough time, monkeys playing upon the keys of a typewriter, might turn out an Encyclopaedia Britannica, so also is it possible in this world where anything can happen, that among the many strange possibilities, a man might rise from the dead. And this is something quite different from the resurrection of Jesus Christ. For, let us make no mistake about the matter,

what we are concerned about is not that a man might conceivably rise from the dead, but that Jesus Christ, who is God manifested in the flesh, rose from the dead by a mighty miracle.

We cannot agree then with the manner in which Dr. Richardson has formulated the question. He speaks of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The early church believed that Jesus rose from the dead, he says, and we must explain that faith. The best way, in fact, the only way to explain it, is to assume that it was based upon fact. But we must press further. Who is this Jesus who rose from the dead? Is He simply another one of the many sinful men who have lived upon this earth? Is He the leader about whom we really do not know too much? Is He the one whom form criticism has stripped of so much of His prerogatives? Who is this Jesus? We are not contending for the belief that someone named Jesus, the founder of the Christian church, a Jew who lived in Palestine in the first century of our era, rose from the dead. Our concern is greater than that. We are concerned rather to believe that the one who performed mighty miracles in Palestine in the first century of our era is God become man, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, the One through whom the worlds were made, who as the God-Man died upon the cross to save His people and who, having died, broke the power of death and by a mighty miracle rose from the dead and emerged from the tomb. That is the Christ whose resurrection we are concerned to believe. In his long discussion, Richardson says nothing about the Trinity, or about the Person of Christ. Indeed, he does little more than speak of the "resurrection of Christ" without really telling us who it is that is raised from the dead. We cannot remain satisfied with his formulation of the problem.

When Jesus Christ appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, He showed himself alive by "many infallible proofs." The word which Luke employs, tekmēriois, means "convincing proofs." Those who saw the risen Saviour had infallible evidence telling them that Jesus had risen. They knew who it was that suffered and who it was that rose from the dead. Without supernatural revelation, there could have been no convincing proclamation of the resurrection. The early witnesses, then, were men who saw Jesus alive after His passion, and who, because they had been divinely instructed, were convinced that He was alive. These were the men who proclaimed that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Why, however, do we today accept their witness? It is at this point that we must again take our departure from what Dr. Richardson has been saying. He argues, and rightly, that the early church possessed this faith that Jesus had risen from the dead, and that the only way in which to explain this faith is that Jesus did so rise. Now, we would ask, how do we know that the early church possessed this faith? The answer is quite simple. We know it because the Bible tells us so. Even upon Dr. Richardson's position, it is really necessary to say this. Even though one apply to the Gospel narratives the drastic treatment of form criticism, it still remains true that we know of the faith of the early church only because of what the Bible tells us. Much as we might wish that we could be free of the Bible, we cannot be so. If we destroy our Bibles, we simply do not know what the early church believed.

It will not do to say, and Dr. Richardson does not say it, that we have an oral tradition which tells us about the faith of the apostolic church, for that is not the case. We do not possess such a tradition. Oral tradition is to an amazing degree based upon the Bible. Were the Bible removed, oral tradition would be something quite different from what it is. No, we cannot appeal to some oral tradition as though the written Scriptures were superfluous or unneces-



sary, for such a tradition does not exist. To learn about the faith of the early church, then, we are dependent upon the Bible. We simply cannot say that we know what the faith of the early church was unless we also acknowledge whence we have derived that knowledge, and that knowledge comes to us from the pages of Holy Scripture.

### The Bible and the Resurrection Faith

If it is true that we today are dependent upon the Bible for a knowledge of the faith and practice of the apostolic church, it is well that we see what the Bible has to say upon this subject. Now, the picture given in the Scriptures is an harmonious one. The early disciples had seen the Lord Jesus after His passion. Visits to the tomb had shown that the tomb was empty, and the visitors had been told that "He is not here; He is risen as He said. Come see the place where the Lord lay." Hence, after the Holy Spirit had come upon them, as had been prophesied, the apostles went out into the world declaring their heart-felt conviction that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. The picture of Scripture is one. The apostolic church believed in the risen Lord.

Even when the most drastic criticism is applied to the Bible, one cannot escape this picture. Employ the methods of form criticism to your heart's content, you cannot do away with this picture that the early church believed in the risen Lord. And, of course, we may very well challenge the right of the critics to pick and to choose at will in their study of the Scriptures. We must approach the Bible with certain presuppositions. We believe that it is the Word of God, and believing that, we are ready to listen to the claims which it makes for itself.

### The Bible and the Christian Faith

This brief survey of Dr. Richardson's approach to the resurrection will serve to bring into clearer focus what the true relation of the Bible to the Christian faith really is. We today cannot simply say that we believe in the resurrection because of the faith of the church. This does not even state the question correctly. We must first define what we mean by resurrection. The question of the resurrection of Jesus Christ can only have significance in the light of a Christian theistic framework. In the last analysis we believe that Christ rose from the dead because we have divine testimony to that fact. That is true of us, and it was true also of the original apostles who beheld the risen Lord. The mere sight of the risen Christ was in itself not sufficient. Mary saw Christ and mistook His identity. She thought that He was the gardener. There was necessary a divine revelation communicated in words to tell her Who it was that stood before her. The faith of the early church then was based not merely upon the fact that certain people had beheld Christ alive after His passion but that they had received divine revelation concerning the meaning of what had transpired. The two who walked to Emmaus received many words, indeed an entire Christology of the Old Testament, from their accompanying risen Savior.

In His great mercy toward us God has not left us who live today to depend upon garbled tradition that so easily becomes corrupted, but has given to us His written Word, in order that

we may have a true and dependable account of those great events upon which His church is founded. As the Westminster Confession says, those things which it is necessary for us to know are set down in Holy Scripture, and hence the Holy Scripture is "most necessary." If we may state the matter very simply we would say that our reason for believing in the resurrection of the Lord is the simple fact that the Bible states that He rose from the dead.

It all depends, of course, upon what kind of a book the Bible is. If it is simply a written record produced by godly men of ancient times, then we can never be sure of its statements. We can never know for certain whether what it says is to be depended upon or not. We can then employ the methods of form criticism or any other type of criticism that happens to be in vogue and dissect the Bible to our heart's content. We can set ourselves up as judges as to what is and what is not true in the Scriptures. But one thing is certain: if we regard the Bible as only a human book, we cannot have a sure word of prophecy.

If on the other hand we approach the Bible with the conviction that it is the very Word of God we shall heed earnestly its statements. We shall listen not merely to what it has to say about ourselves but also to what it has to say about itself. Realizing that our great task is that of exegesis, we shall not then try to pick and choose, to cut out and to pare down. What does the Scripture say? And in believing wonder we shall read the accounts of the resurrection. Here then is the reason why men believe the resurrection. The Bible tells us that the resurrection occurred, and because by the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit we regard the Bible as the Word of God we believe what it says. It is perfectly true that in the light and against the background of the Christian theistic framework the evidence does support the testimony of Scripture. The "evidence," however, as it is popularly called, cannot be properly studied unless it first be properly interpreted in the light of the Scriptures.

At this point an objection is likely to be raised. It is often said that the Bible is the production or creation of the Church and not the producer of the Church. With this statement of the question we cannot agree. There is a certain sense in which it may be said that the Bible arose within the apostolic church, at least that the New Testament did. We may perhaps also say that the Old Testament in a certain sense arose within Israel. These statements must, however, be carefully examined.

Is it correct to say that the early church produced the New Testament or that the New Testament is a product of the early church? As these questions are thus put we feel constrained to answer them in the negative for they put the matter in an entirely false light. This is a problem the solution to which can come from the Scriptures alone. When the time for the writing of the New Testament came God chose those men whom He desired to be His human writers. We may note the case of the apostle Paul. Through long years of preparation God brought the apostle to the place where he could compose his epistles. This was not done at the direction of any church council. We never read that the apostolic church, meeting in formal session, decided that there should be an epistle to the church at Rome and commissioned the apostle Paul to write that epistle. Rather, Paul wrote for the Spirit of God had come upon him and, to use Peter's language, had "borne him." What Paul wrote then was the Word of God. Now Paul was, of course, a member of the apostolic church and in a very real sense his epistles may be said to be his own epistles, but how can it be said that the New Testament was a creation of the Apostolic Church? This claim does not do justice to what the Bible says about its own origin.

The Bible, then is not a legacy which the Apostolic Church has bequeathed to us, but is the Word of God.

Inasmuch as the Bible is the Word of God, it is to the Bible that we must go, if we are to learn what our beliefs are to be. This is the proper relationship between the Bible and our faith. The Bible tells us what our faith is to be; it tells us what the Christian religion is. It is perfectly true that all the great saving events of Christianity might have taken place without a written record of them being made. Jesus Christ might have been born of the virgin Mary, might have lived His life of sinless perfection upon this earth and died in behalf of His people. He might have risen from the dead and ascended to heaven without any record of these events having been made in writing.

Suppose, however, that that had happened. Suppose that all these saving events of redemptive history had really taken place, and then God had spoken no more to His church. What would have been the result? It is easy to imagine what the result would have been. We would have been left to oral tradition with all the error and superstition that it often carries with it. In course of time, and it would not have been a very long time, the truth concerning Jesus Christ and what He did for us would have been so encrusted with error that one would no longer know what to believe concerning Him. It is no exaggeration to say that in a very short time the truth would have become garbled; even the very name of Jesus might have been forgotten. We have only to witness the statements in the Talmud concerning Christ to see how quickly truth can become mingled with error.<sup>4</sup> And how could the church possibly have defined her doctrine? When the world asked her what she believed about God, what would have been her reply? There would have been no written word to which she might turn, no sure word of prophecy to guide her deliberations and declarations. Suppose too that she were asked concerning the way of salvation, what could she reply? She would wallow in the swamp of dismay and uncertainty. Darkness would becloud her pronouncements as darkness beclouds her pronouncements now when she departs from the infallible Word of God.

Were there no Bible we really would have no message. Even though Christ had come and the saving work were accomplished, we probably would know little thereof. The church could speak with no sure voice, directing men who were in darkness to the Light of the world for the church herself would for the most part be in darkness. How could her preachers possibly get their message straight, when they would be in so great uncertainty as to what that message was?

We do not mean that a man today must first possess a correct doctrine of Scripture before he can be saved. Such is not the case at all, and it is but caricature to represent conservative Christians as holding to any such notion. A man is saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ and not because he gives allegiance to a particular doctrine of Scripture. To state the matter thus is to becloud the entire issue. What is required is that a man possess saving faith, and saving faith, among other things, involves knowledge of the truth. Where, however, does a man obtain this knowledge? To ask that question is to answer it. He obtains that knowledge from the sacred Scriptures and from them alone. And this is the heart of the matter!

The Bible is the source from whence we learn what our doctrine is to be and also what our life is to be. All the thousands of Christian books and sermons which have been produced would never have come into existence were it not for the Bible. It is a very wrong and unjust thing to depreciate the Scriptures as so many are doing today. Take away the Scriptures, and those who are so insistent that Jesus Christ alone is the Word of God probably would not even know the words "Jesus Christ." Take away the Scriptures and Christianity would disappear from the earth. Let those who will call this bibliolatry. We know that it is not. We know rather that in giving us the Bible, God has given us a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, a Word to direct us on our course and to guide us to heaven.

For the Bible is "most necessary." And in saying that it is "most necessary" and in saying that it is God's Word we are also saying that it is a revelation from Him. In fact, we may safely assert that the Bible is the crowning point of God's redemptive revelation. Without the Bible we do not have the full revelation that God is pleased to give to mankind. The Bible is no mere witness to some revelation as is so often erroneously asserted today; rather the Bible itself is revelation, the Word spoken by Him that is true and pure and holy. The crowning point of all God's redemptive revelation is the Bible, the Holy Scriptures that alone are able to make one wise unto salvation.

How great a sin it is to depreciate the Word which God has so graciously given to us! May God preserve us from this sin! Rather than being ashamed of the Scriptures; rather than looking to them merely as a human book, may we emphasize what today so needs to be emphasized, the fact that they are the written revelation of the one true and eternal God. Let us never fail to remember that "the entrance of thy words giveth light."

#### DOCUMENTATION

1. Alan Richardson. History Sacred and Profane. Philadelphia, 1964.
2. Ibid., p. 196.
3. Ibid., p. 202.
4. Cf. R. Travers Herford. Christianity in Talmud and Midrash, London, 1903.

# A MODERN VIEW OF THE BIBLE

EDWARD J. YOUNG

In our lectures thus far we have sought to present a view of the Bible which we believe the Bible claims for itself. This procedure is, of course, a tacit acknowledgment that we regard the Bible as our final and absolute authority in the field of doctrine. For a doctrine of Scripture, then, we have turned not to a consensus of modern opinion or to the "living theology of the church," whatever that may be, but to the Bible itself. In doing this we believe that we have been acting in accordance with the procedure of the historic Christian church. It can hardly be denied that throughout the years, when the church has wanted to define her doctrine, she has turned to the Bible.

Today, however, the procedure seems to be reversed. Today, it would appear that attempts are being made at writing creeds which are not designed to be expositions of the Scriptural teaching. As is well known a proposed Confession popularly referred to as the Confession of 1967 is being presented to the United Presbyterian Church, and, should it be adopted, would become the statement of belief of that church.

This fact should be of interest and even concern to all Christians and not merely to Presbyterians, for what is being proposed is typical of much that is engulfing the church of Christ today. This proposed Confession, however, brings us head-on with the emphases of modern theology, emphases which we believe are destructive of the Christian faith. This is strong language, but it is not too strong. It is our profound conviction, after careful study of this proposed Confession, that it proceeds upon the assumption that there is no final and absolute truth. Should this Confession be adopted, it would be tantamount to declaring to the world that the church has no message; there is no final truth.

Our concern, however, at this point is not with this fatal weakness of the Confession but rather with the attitude toward the Bible which is found therein. This proposed confession presents a view which is basically out of harmony with that found in the Bible itself and hence out of harmony with the traditional Christian conception of Scripture. It is not saying too much if we plainly assert that the view of the Bible found in this Confession is thoroughly unbiblical.

## The Confession and the Bible

We are told, "The one sufficient revelation of God is Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate, to whom the Holy Spirit bears witness in many ways. The church has received the Old and New Testaments as the normative witness to this revelation and has recognized them as Holy Scriptures." This is the first paragraph under the heading: The Bible. It will perhaps

enable us the better to understand this position if we notice what had previously been asserted concerning confessions. "Confessions and declarations are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him."

With these words we reach the heart of the matter as far as the identification of the Bible is concerned. Nowhere in this proposed Confession is the Bible explicitly denominated the Word of God. What a contrast to the Westminster Confession which so plainly and honestly states: "Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these;" There then follows a list of all the books of the Old and New Testament. Again, the Westminster Confession speaks of the arguments ". . . whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God;" The proposed Confession of 1967, studiously it would seem, avoids speaking of the Bible as the Word of God.

This is a grave fault, for it does injustice to an important Scriptural doctrine. It is true that Jesus Christ our Lord is the Word of God incarnate. He who is the second Person of the ever blessed Trinity in the fullness of time did take unto Himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being born of the Virgin Mary and so as the God-Man lived a life of sinlessness upon this earth in order that He might render satisfaction to His Father and redeem His people from their sins. And the Bible is the Word of God written. There is no contradiction in saying that Jesus Christ is the eternal Word of God become man; the Word of God incarnate, and the Bible is the Word of God written, the inscripturated Word. In fact if we have any concern whatever for the teaching of Holy Scripture this is the only conclusion to which we can come, and this is the conclusion to which the church throughout the ages has come.

In no wise does it detract from the authority or the dignity of the Person of our Lord to assert that the Bible is the Word of God written. Nor does it make of us Bibliolators if we so declare. When such charges are levelled against those who hold to the full truthfulness and authority of the Scriptures, it is evidence either that those who make such charges have not carefully thought through what they are saying or that they are deliberately accepting the modern view of the Bible. Were it not for the Bible we would not know that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Word of God. It is really a rather foolish procedure to reject the Scriptures as absolutely authoritative and to depreciate the concept of propositional revelation and then to talk a great deal about Jesus Christ as the only Word of God. It is somewhat like entering a darkened room, switching on the electric light and then noticing that on a table in the center of the room there is a light bulb larger than the one that has just been switched on and then declaring that the only light bulb in the room is the one on the table. The hymn writer, in one of the grandest hymns of the Lutheran Church has put the matter in a true light:

By grace I'm saved, grace free and boundless,  
My soul, believe and doubt it not.  
Why stagger at this word of promise?  
Hath Scripture ever falsehood taught?  
Nay, then this Word must true remain:  
By grace thou too shalt heaven obtain.

What is involved here is really something far more serious than inconsistency. The position espoused in the proposed Confession of 1967 is based upon a philosophical position that would exclude God from His universe, or better, would make Him but a part of that universe. It would obliterate the distinction between God as the Creator and the created world. Hence, in such a scheme there is no room for what is often depreciatingly called "propositional revelation." Such revelation, it is claimed, posits a mechanical view of the universe, and such a view is uncongenial to the modern mind.

We must return, however, to a more careful consideration and examination of the declarations of the new Confession. We are told that "the one sufficient revelation of God is Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate, . . ." If this statement were true then it would clearly follow that God had given us no other revelations. If the one sufficient revelation of God is Jesus Christ, then God would have done something very superfluous if He had given us any other revelations beside Jesus Christ.

The writers have used the word "sufficient" very loosely. Do they mean that apart from Jesus Christ there are other revelations of God, but that these revelations are not sufficient? Or do they mean that inasmuch as the revelation in Jesus Christ is sufficient there is no need for any other revelations? The writers have not made this point clear. Nor have they made clear what they mean by the word "sufficient." In what sense is Jesus Christ the sufficient revelation of God? We are not told.

At this point there emerges one of the chief characteristics of the proposed Confession, namely, that from the point of clarity, it is not satisfactory. It stands in marked contrast with the precise and measured language of the Westminster Confession. The Westminster Confession did not proceed in a condition of "low visibility" but sought to make clear what it was declaring. The reason for this is obvious. Those who framed the Westminster Confession believed that they were setting forth the teaching of the Word of God. For this reason they sought to be as precise as possible. They were dealing with high and holy matters. Upon them fell the task of expounding what they believed the Word of God taught. The result was a preciseness of language which stands in marked contrast to the looseness and vagueness which characterize the proposed Confession of 1967.

What then is meant when the proposed confession speaks of Jesus Christ as the one sufficient revelation? Perhaps the word "one" is of help, but we are not sure. Does this word serve the purpose of excluding other revelations? It would seem that it does, but that point is not made clear. Even with the presence of this little word it is possible that the confession would have us understand that there are other revelations of God which are insufficient, but that the one sufficient revelation is Jesus Christ.

Not only is the language of the Confession imprecise, it is also false. Jesus Christ our Lord is not the one sufficient revelation of God. God has revealed Himself in the created universe, so that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." We may rightly speak of the light of nature. Nature is not dark but light and points to its Maker, so that we are without excuse. Proceeding upon Scriptural grounds, the Westminster Confession declares that ". . . the light of nature, and the words of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men

unexcusable . . ." General revelation, then, is sufficient for its own purposes. It is a sufficient revelation of God. It does declare the goodness, wisdom and power of God, and it furthermore declares His righteousness. Thus considered, it is a sufficient revelation, and it is wholly false and unbiblical to say, as the proposed Confession does, that the one sufficient revelation of God is Jesus Christ, the Word of God. To speak this way is not to honor the Lord Jesus Christ, but is to cast reflection upon the wisdom of God, as that wisdom has been made known to us in His holy Word, the Bible.

Furthermore, in human history God has revealed Himself by means of saving events. In carrying out His plan of salvation He has performed mighty miracles and He has given to His chosen people the gift of prophecy. In the mighty exodus from Egypt for example we have a revelation of God which was sufficient for the purposes for which it was designed. In the performance of this miracle God did not somehow stumble and fail so that the exodus was an insufficient revelation. For its purpose it was thoroughly sufficient. It is necessary to note that if man were properly to understand the meaning of this sufficient revelation he needed its complement, or explanation, and so accompanying the exodus and all the miracles for that matter, there was the revelatory word. But the miracle in itself was a sufficient revelation of God. There was nothing lacking in it so that it would fail to accomplish the purpose that God intended. It was a sufficient revelation.

When the eternal Son of God came to this earth, His advent was on a wave of the supernatural. He performed mighty miracles in which the power of God was displayed. Supreme among these, of course, was His resurrection from the dead. Accompanying the preaching of the Gospel on the part of the apostles, God performed signs and wonders. Finally God gave to the world His written revelation, His own Word. This Word also is a sufficient revelation, and accomplishes all those purposes for which it was designed. All God's revelations are sufficient; none of God's work is faulty. It is simply not true to assert that the only sufficient revelation of God is Jesus Christ. At the outset we have a depreciation of the Bible.

We are told that the Holy Spirit bears witness to Jesus Christ in many ways. Again, we must complain of imprecision in the language. What does this statement mean? How does the Holy Spirit bear witness to Jesus Christ? We are told that "The church has received the Old and New Testaments as the normative witness to this revelation and has recognized them as Holy Scriptures." Perhaps we are to understand, although the confession does not actually say so, that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments constitute one of the ways in which the Holy Spirit bears witness to Jesus Christ. This may be what the Confession means, although it is really somewhat difficult to tell just what the relationship of the sentences in this particular paragraph to one another is.

If then the Holy Scriptures are one of the ways in which the Holy Spirit witnesses to Jesus Christ, what are the other ways? We are not told, and again we must accuse the proposed confession of vagueness. If we understand the Scriptures aright, we believe that they teach that in the work of regeneration, that mysterious supernatural work of the Holy Spirit of God, the new born soul receives the conviction that the Bible is the Word of God. ". . . our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof," asserts the Westminster Confession of Faith, "is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts." Evidently, however, the professed Confession of 1967



rejects this doctrine of the Confession and of the Scripture, for it does not regard the Bible as the Word of God. We then are left with our original question. What are these many ways in which the Holy Spirit bears witness to Jesus Christ? The confession does not explicate this statement, and therefore must be adjudged guilty of theological frivolity. How can an honest man accept a statement of faith when he does not know what that statement means?

### The Church and the Bible

We look then at what is said about the reception of the Bible in the church. Again we find ourselves in the land of vagueness. We are told that the church has accepted the Scriptures as the normative witness to God's revelation. What does this mean? Several questions must be asked.

It is true that the church has accepted the Old and the New Testaments as the normative witness to God's revelation Jesus Christ, but why has the church done this? What has led it to accept such books as this witness? And why has the church regarded this witness as normative? What authority has she had for so doing? Is the church on good ground in her action? Are the Old and New Testaments actually a normative witness to Jesus Christ? And in what sense are they a normative witness? Are all their statements concerning Christ normative? To put it in very simple terms, can we believe all that the Bible says about Jesus Christ? To ask the question in such a pointed manner is really to answer it, for it is perfectly clear that this new proposed Confession of 1967 is based upon the modern negative critical approach to the Bible. Form criticism underlies what appears in this confession, even though that fact may not be apparent.

If we were to accept every statement of the Bible as a normative statement concerning Jesus Christ, then we would fall into the error of ". . . equating the Biblical canon directly with the Word of God. By contrast the preeminent and primary meaning of the Word of God in the Confession of 1967 is the Word of God incarnate. The function of the Bible is to be the instrument of the revelation of the Word in the living church. It is not a witness among others but the witness without parallel, the norm of all other witness. At the same time questions of antiquated cosmology, diverse cultural influences and the like, may be dealt with by careful scholarship uninhibited by the doctrine of inerrancy which placed the older Reformed theology at odds with advances in historical and scientific studies." This statement is found in the section: Introductory Comment and Analysis to the Proposed Confession of 1967. Now we are getting somewhere. That impressive sounding statement about the Old and New Testament being regarded as the normative witness to Jesus Christ must be interpreted in the light of the Introductory Statement.

Let us make this matter as plain as we are able. According to this proposed confession we simply cannot appeal to any statement of the Bible for information about Jesus Christ. In what sense then are the Scriptures the normative witness to Jesus Christ? This is a difficult question to answer. We can perhaps approach an answer by pointing out again in what way the Testaments are NOT a normative witness. They are not a normative witness in the sense that they are inerrant, or that the canon of the Bible is to be equated with the Word of God. The confession pulls no punches on that matter. The Bible is not the Word of God written. On that

point the proposed confession leaves little room for doubt. In what sense then is the Bible a normative witness?

At this point the confession enshrouds itself with the vagueness that is so dear to the heart of the modern Biblical theologian. If the Bible is a normative witness we ought to be able to discover in what way it is normative. It is not normative in the way that it itself claims and that the historic church throughout the ages has claimed. How then is it normative? We are thrown back upon modern scholarship, and probably the residue that modern scholarship leaves to us is the normative witness. Certainly we should reject the rest, for the rest is all in error and not trustworthy. Or, does the whole Bible, filled with error, constitute a normative witness? Is error a normative witness to Jesus Christ? We would appreciate an answer on this point from the confession.

Scholarship, however, has a way of being strangely non-unanimous. It is true that there is a certain consensus of opinion, a certain wave of propaganda that keeps coming over us all the time. If we follow the Theologische Literaturzeitung we have a pretty good idea of what the "theologians" are saying. And by the time it has all been translated into English, the ecclesiastical politicians are parading it as exciting new insights and dimensions of Christianity. Nevertheless, among those who base their study upon the presupposition that the Bible is not a revelation from God, there is a surprising amount of lack of unity. The ecclesiastical politicians may proclaim as long and loudly as they desire about the living theology of the church and the will of God for this generation and the like, but the fact is, there is really no such thing as a unanimity of opinion among scholars of the negative critical school. What these men write often largely cancels out what others are affirming. Witness the instructive article of Soggin about recent pronouncements in the field of Old Testament as an example.<sup>1</sup> We cannot base our view of the Bible upon scholarship as such, for scholarship possesses the nature of a kaleidoscope.

### The Normative Witness

The whole matter will become clear by means of an illustration. In what sense, for example, is the Bible a witness concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ? At first sight, it would seem that the confession is unequivocal upon this subject. "The central elements of the faith of Presbyterians," it tells us in the Introductory Statement, "are all shared as well by other Christians." In the confession itself there occurs the statement, "God raised him from the dead, vindicating him as Messiah and Lord." Furthermore, it is asserted that the ". . . risen Christ is the saviour of all men." "To receive life from the risen Lord is to have life eternal; to refuse life from him is to be separated from God in death." Certainly these statements are unobjectionable; do not conservatives believe these very things?

True it is that in themselves these words express the teaching of the Bible. But we cannot take these words in themselves. The confession will not permit us to do that. We must understand them, indeed, we can only understand them in the framework of the confession itself, and it is this very framework of reference which gives to these beautiful words a connotation which they have not usually borne in the historic Christian church.

Even though the Introductory Comment to the confession declares that the Bible is the "witness without parallel, the norm of all other witnesses," it also declares that ". . . questions of antiquated cosmology, diverse cultural influences, and the like, may be dealt with by careful scholarship uninhibited by the doctrine of inerrancy which placed the older Reformed theology at odds with advances in historical and scientific studies." What then shall we say about the resurrection of our Lord?

Let us make no mistake about this matter. If we think that we can simply turn to the Bible and accept at face value what the Bible says about Christ's resurrection, we are acting very naively. The proposed confession breathes deeply the atmosphere of a certain modern approach to the Bible. Its principal author is a professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, which has distinguished itself in recent years by its rejection of the historic Presbyterian faith and its adherence to the modern emphases of dialectical theology.

When the confession speaks of the resurrection, we must notice that we can have the resurrection only after we have submitted ourselves to the dictates of certain emphases of modern scholarship. To put it more accurately, we can believe only what modern scholarship leaves to us of the resurrection. Now, it is probably not unjust to say that according to many modern scholars what we have in the four Gospels simply represents the faith of the early church. We must approach the study of the Gospels through the avenue of form criticism and literary genre. We must still seek to remove anything in the nature of later editorial accretion and seek to penetrate to the original Sitz im Leben of the individual oracles or utterances or pieces.

And then when we have faithfully performed the work that form criticism demands of us, we must still face the question of miracle. Did the Lord Jesus Christ rise from the dead by means of a mighty miracle? And when we use the term "the Lord Jesus Christ," we have reference to the second Person of the Holy Trinity, the eternal Son of God who is one with the Father, indeed, the same in substance and equal with the Father and the Spirit in power and in glory. But is this what modern scholarship means? We fear not, and we fear also that the influence of modern scholarship has made itself felt in the framing of the confession. Despite the language which sounds Scriptural, we fear that the confession is really rejecting the old orthodox, Scriptural view of the resurrection of the Lord.

The reason why we think that this confession has not presented a Scriptural view of the resurrection of the Lord, nor for that matter of any other Scriptural doctrine, is found in the following statement, "God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a mystery which the Scriptures express in various ways. It is called the sacrifice of a lamb, a shepherd's life given for his sheep, atonement by a priest; again it is a ransom of a slave, payment of debt, vicarious satisfaction of a legal penalty, and victory over the powers of evil. These are images of a truth which remains beyond the reach of all theory in the depths of God's love for man."

This language requires careful analysis. At first sight it sounds quite Scriptural, and for that very reason one is likely to be deceived by it. But even though the language sounds Scriptural the thought is anything but Scriptural. The thought comes, not from the Bible, but from Immanuel Kant. If we consider the various Scriptural phrases which are employed to express God's reconciling act in Christ Jesus we may well ask what their purpose is. Take

for example the sacrifice of a lamb. Is that language simply an image of a truth which remains beyond all theory? If that is the case, then it follows that we simply cannot set forth that truth in human language, nor can we explain it. Instead of the sacrifice of a lamb actually being God's reconciling work, the sacrifice of a lamb is but an image. And if the sacrifice of a lamb is but an image then the real truth is not the sacrifice of a lamb but something else, something far removed from man, so far in fact that he cannot reach it. He cannot even express a theory about it. He can really say nothing about it. This to us sounds very much like that realm of the noumenal, propounded by Kant, where he said we had the thing in itself, but about which we can say nothing. Now if the sacrifice of a lamb is but an image, and the truth is hidden somewhere in the love of God or in some realm where one cannot theorize about it, we had better see exactly what this means.

This means that the sacrifice of a lamb is itself not God's reconciling work. Indeed, it is but an image, and it is the image of a truth which remains beyond the reach of all theory. Inasmuch as this truth remains beyond the reach of all theory we really cannot say anything about this truth. We can only be content with the image, and if we are to be consistent, which the proposed confession is not, we can say nothing about the truth of which the sacrifice of a lamb is but an image.

Here again is that old distinction of Kant's between the phenomenal and the noumenal, a distinction which is so prominent in much of modern theology and which is utterly unChristian in nature. If then all the above phrases which speak of God's reconciling work in Christ are merely images and nothing more, just what was the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross? It was not God's reconciling act in Christ Jesus for that is a truth hidden deep in the love of God and beyond the reach of theorizing. At most the death of Jesus Christ could have been but an image, that and nothing more. Inasmuch as the truth of God's work of reconciliation is beyond the reach of all theory in the depths of God's love for man, then that work of reconciliation cannot possibly be the death of Christ upon the cross. The death of Christ upon the cross at Golgotha was something about which we can theorize, and about which men have theorized. Men may say that His death was simply a display of God's moral government; they may declare that it was a manifestation of God's hatred of sin and His love for sinners. Or they may say that it was a death designed to exercise a moral influence upon men. All of these interpretations are theories. The Bible itself gives us an explanation of the death of Christ. The Bible tells us that that death was a satisfaction to the justice of God. This is the view that Christian believers have maintained stoutly. They believe that this interpretation explains the meaning of what happened when the Lord of Glory died upon the cross. If we may use the language of one of the hymns:

And when I die, I die to Thee;  
Thy precious death hath won for me  
The life that never endeth.

That hymn could never have been written if the proposed Confession of 1967 is correct, for that hymn expounds a theory, a Scriptural theory, we believe, of the death of Christ. It expounds a theory of God's work of reconciliation in Christ, and according to the Confession of 1967 that is something that we cannot do, for that work of reconciliation is beyond the reach of theory. For that matter the Confession is rather inconsistent in speaking of God's reconciling

act in Jesus Christ, for just as soon as it uses those words it is itself expounding a theory. This it cannot do, however, if that about which it expresses a theory is something about which no theory can be expressed. This inconsistency, by the way, stands out in glaring contrast to the consistent Scriptural emphasis of the historic Westminster Confession.

It may not be out of place to note that if we can conceive of a subject and speak of that subject we can also theorize about it. We may not be in possession of sufficient information to theorize very accurately about the subject; but if we speak about it at all, indeed, if we can conceive of it, we can also theorize about it. It is foolish then to assert that we cannot theorize about God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ, for were that true, we would not even be able to utter the words "God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ."

With this preparation we may now look at the question of the resurrection. Inasmuch as the reconciling act of God is not to be equated with the historical death of Christ upon Calvary, for it is in the depths of God's love and beyond the reach of theorizing, what about the resurrection of Christ? Is this not a part of God's reconciling act? The Bible at least says so. The Bible declares that Christ ". . . was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25b). If then the confession should divorce the resurrection from the reconciling work of God in Christ it would be going contrary to the Scriptures. The resurrection, however, is dealt with under the heading "Jesus Christ" and is evidently regarded as comprising part of His redeeming work.

Does then the resurrection belong to that realm about which we cannot theorize? If it does we are face to face with a position that is quite contrary to that presented in the Scriptures. It is time now that we evaluate this position which is found in the proposed Confession of 1967. The Christian religion is an historical religion for it is founded squarely upon those things which God did for sinners upon this earth in history. If we remove the miracles of Christianity, and in particular those great saving works of our Lord which He performed in the days of His flesh, then we have abandoned Christianity and have substituted for it something altogether foreign. Without its historical basis there is no Christianity. The Christian religion is not merely a collection or body of ideas and thoughts that are eternally true. The Christian religion is an account of something that happened. It tells us of the love of God that was manifested in Jesus Christ upon this earth when Jesus Christ gave up His life upon the cross to save His people from their sins. Were Christianity nothing more than a body of eternal truths, it could only bring despair to man. But, thanks be to God, it is more than that. It tells us that God has done something to save us from our sins, and it points us to that one great act of redemption which was performed here upon this earth in history upon a particular calendar day, when the Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross and then on the third day rose again from the dead.

If we remove all the great saving events of Christianity from the realm of history and place them in the depths of God's love for man where they remain beyond the reach of all theory, what we are doing is destroying Christianity. The Christian is concerned about his salvation. He knows full well how great the enormity of his sin is and how desperately he needs God's forgiveness. If that salvation depends upon the death and resurrection of the Lord, that is one thing. The Christian can then say, "He loved me and gave himself for me." When he does speak that way, he is engaging in theorizing. He is giving an explanation of the meaning of

what Christ did in His death upon the tree. And when he looks at the resurrection he again engages in theorizing. He says that God performed a wondrous miracle and the dead body of the Lord Jesus came to newness of life and emerged from the tomb. He arose from the dead! This is the true explanation and the Christian heart loves to ponder the meaning of the great saving and redemptive acts of his faith.

The Christian religion is something about which one can theorize. The Bible itself gives an interpretation of the great acts which it records. If we read the Bible we learn that God was at work in the fulfillment of His promises of salvation. If we cannot theorize about Christianity, we simply have no Christianity. And, for that matter, the Confession of 1967 gives the lie to its own proposals when it itself engages in theorizing. If God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a truth which remains beyond the reach of all theory, the confession has done a tremendous amount of theorizing upon the untheorizable.

Perhaps it is now time to return to our subject. In what sense is the Bible a normative witness? It would appear that the Bible is really not necessary at all as a witness, and this despite certain statements to the contrary in the proposed Confession of 1967. This confession, like much modern theology, both wants the Bible and it does not want it. Without the Bible it would have nothing to talk about. It could not use the terms, reconciliation, Jesus Christ, resurrection, etc., were it not for the Bible. It needs the Bible. Nevertheless, it does not want the Bible as an authority. It would rather derive its theology from the living church, which of course means that it prefers to derive its theology from the mind of man. The view of the Christian religion presented in the proposed Confession of 1967 comes not from the Scriptures but from man. It is essentially not a Christian theology, and any church which adopts such a confession will have ceased in the true sense of the term to be a Christian church.

### The Bible Today

In these lectures I have tried to set forth a different view of the Bible. It would be a very popular thing to go along today with the current of the times. If we did that we should have the approbation of man. We should be labeled scholars, and in the eyes of many, that seems to be something greatly to be desired. The modern world is quite ready to speak of the scholarship of those evangelicals who have given in on the doctrine of Scripture. Yes, if we too give in there are certain rewards that can be ours.

There is one thing, however, that will not be ours if we compromise the doctrine of Scripture which the Bible teaches. We cannot have the favor of the Lord. We may indeed receive man's favor: we may be given compliment after compliment, but it will all be in vain. We can no longer have God's favor, for we will have then compromised the truth upon this all important doctrine.

The way upon which we are called to go is not an easy one. There are those who will not hesitate to label us Bibliolators, extreme conservatives, ultra-fundamentalists and the like. But, despite all this, despite the liturgy of vituperation which some delight to employ, if we remain true to the Lord upon this important doctrine, His favor will be upon us. We shall

know that we are not alone. We are standing in the tradition of the Christian church, and we are basing our stand upon the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture. But more important than anything else, God will be with us. And what are all the plaudits of man, if we have not God? The Christian path is not necessarily an easy one, but it is a blessed one, for our Lord is ever with us.

Today the Bible is under constant attack. We have considered the proposed Confession of 1967, for it is only one of many modern attacks upon the Bible. There are many such attacks, but what makes this confession so tragic is that it is being proposed to a large church for adoption, and it would seem that there are those who do not realize the import of what its adoption would mean. But the attack upon the Scriptures is widespread, and what is particularly sad, some of those who should be raising their voices in defense of the Bible are beginning to adopt the position of the enemy.

This is not the time to shrink from taking a stand and declaring the whole counsel of God on this particular doctrine. The Bible has withstood many an attack. Men have stood up in self-confident vein to declare that there were errors in the Bible. They thought they had discovered those errors, and hence, they simply added their voices to a rejection of the orthodox or Biblical position. Nevertheless, truth has a way, after all, of coming to the fore, and often, it raised its head to point out that whereas there was error, that error was not upon the part of the Bible but rather upon the part of those who had declared that the Bible was in error.

And so it is today. There may be much in Scripture that we cannot understand. To deny that there are difficulties is to play the part of folly. But there are no errors. We look back to a history of triumph upon the part of the Bible as it has withstood the various attacks that have been leveled against it. We cannot be expected to give an explanation of every difficulty in the Bible. We are called upon to preach that Word, and it is that which we must do. But we must be sure that what we preach is the Word. And when we preach the Word we need not fear that it will somehow fail us. It has never failed man, for it is the Word of Him who is the Truth. It is that Word which we are called upon to preach. May God keep us from being weary in so doing.

#### DOCUMENTATION

1. J. Alberto Soggin: "Geschichte, Historie und Heilsgeschichte im Alten Testament" in Theologische Literaturzeitung, No. 10, Vol. 89.

## BOOK REVIEWS

THINGS WHICH BECOME SOUND DOCTRINE. By J. Dwight Pentecost. Fleming H. Revell Company, Westwood, N.J., 1965. 159 pp., \$3.50.

This book is the product of a series of sermons preached by the chairman of the Department of Bible Exposition (Dallas Theological Seminary) at the Grace Bible Church of which he is the pastor. The chapters deal with the fourteen key words of the Christian faith which were expounded in the series: depravity, grace, regeneration, imputation, substitution, repentance, redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, justification, sanctification, security, predestination, and resurrection. Although each chapter is a unit in itself, each relates to the other chapters in the series. Each chapter contains an excellent exposition of the word involved and is clearly outlined for the reader.

Since the sermons were geared for the layman, he will receive much profit from this book. The book will also provide a good refresher course for the trained minister and layman and a model for similar series that could be preached by pastors. After reading the book, the reviewer desired an opportunity to preach such a series.

ROBERT GROMACKI

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THE PLAGUE OF PLAGUES. By Ralph Venning. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, 1965. 284 pp., \$1.50, paper.

The Plague of Plagues is a reprint of a treatise on sin by a seventeenth century non-conformist pastor in London. Basing his work on Romans 7:13, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the writer is burdened to so expose sin in all its ugliness that his readers may flee every form of evil.

He treats the subject by first pointing out the sinfulness of sin in its "contrariety" to God and to men, and then summons at length the witness against sin, being God, angels, man, creation, law, and even sin itself. Venning concludes his study with an application of the Doctrine of Sin in the lives of his readers.

The striking feature of this book is the author's thorough grasp of Scripture, and his ability to bring together passages from both Old and New Testaments which bear on his discussion. Each page of the book is full of Scripture used either directly or in allusion or illustration.

I found this book, therefore, to be a valuable exposition of the Biblical teaching of sin, and in good accord with literal and historical interpretation. However, having been composed in the seventeenth century, the book does not lend itself to fast reading, and upon occasion the style is ponderous and the words difficult. This is small difficulty compared with the compensations of a refreshing and thoroughly Biblical exposition of that great plague, Sin.

HENRY BRYANT

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THE MORNING STAR: TWO CENTURIES OF VIOLENCE, FROM WYCLIFFE TO LUTHER. By G. H. W. Parker. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1965. 284 pp., \$3.75.

This is Volume Three of a proposed eight volume series on The Advance of Christianity Through the Centuries, edited by F. F. Bruce, Professor of Biblical criticism and Exegesis of the University of Manchester, England. The first volume, The Spreading Flame, was written by Dr. Bruce himself, the second, The Growing Storm by G. M. S. Walker. Volumes six and seven have also been published under the titles, Light in the North (the story of the Scottish Covenanters) by J. D. Douglas and The Inextinguishable Blaze by A. Skevington Wood.

Outstanding modern scholars have been chosen to review the several periods of church history from the evangelical viewpoint. The present volume, The Morning Star, deals with the period just prior to the Reformation. From the title one might suppose that the treatise is all about John Wycliffe and his work since this great man has often been called "The Morning Star of the Reformation." But such is not the case. The author begins with a survey of Wycliffe and his contributions. But then he proceeds to write the story of the Lollards who succeeded Wycliffe and then the account of John Hus and his work in Bohemia. He deals with the Great Schism and the Conciliar Movement, Renaissance influences, the mystics and The New Devotion, the French Church, Spain and Reform and Savonarola and the crisis in Italy. He closes his work appropriately with a chapter on Erasmus and the Hope of Christian Humanism.

In fifteen lucid chapters the author paints a full picture of the pre-Reformation scene. He most skillfully weaves all of the integral parts of the picture into one por-

trayal. Dr. Goeffrey Parker brings a background of eminent scholarship into the task of writing this book. He has held professorships at the University of Leicester, England and at the University of Canterbury, Christ Church, New Zealand.

The book is well documented and at its end there is a comprehensive bibliography. The chapters are not easy reading but they are factual and dependable. They provide splendid material on a section of church history that is sometimes overlooked. One could wish that the author had brightened his pages with a bit more illustrative and descriptive material. Lack of space allotted to him for his task doubtless explains this deficiency at least to some extent.

Following the fifteenth chapter there are chronological tables presenting a list of the popes of the two hundred year period, a list of the Holy Roman Emperors of the same period, and comparable lists of the kings of England, France and Hungary which are helpful in tracing the varied history of pre-Reformation times.

This reviewer does not hesitate to recommend this work to the student of history. It should be added to the other volumes of this fine series.

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THE REGISTER OF THE COMPANY OF PASTORS OF GENEVA IN THE TIME OF CALVIN. Edited and Translated by Philip Edgcumbe Hughes. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1966. 380 pp., \$12.50.

Here is an historic volume reflecting the character of the church and state in the days of John Calvin. This is not a new work.

It is a translation of the work which came into existence in the years 1546 to 1564. Some ten years after the coming of Calvin to Geneva in 1536, the pastors of the Genevan Church started to keep a register of their affairs and transactions.

The register is put together somewhat like a secretary records the minutes of church meetings. Such minutes contain matters of progress, conflict, variations of opinion, projects initiated and carried out, incidents involving certain individuals and so on. By reading the minutes of a congregation one can get a pretty good idea of the sort of witness it has borne in the community.

So it is with regard to The Register of the Company of Pastors of Geneva in the Time of Calvin. One learns from it what sort of church-state existed under the influence of John Calvin. His theocracy is depicted in a fascinating and factual way. Unfortunately not all of the secretaries who kept the records were as careful and faithful in their responsibility as would have been desired. If they had, the picture would have been much more nearly perfect.

The Geneva of Calvin was a city dedicated to the ideal of the harmonious cooperation of church and state in common subjection to the will and Word of Almighty God. The Register gives evidence that relations between church and state were often strained, at times almost to the breaking point. How-

ever, it is clear that the system in operation at Geneva, largely under the influence of Calvin was unique and of far-reaching influence. Cities and communities all over Europe sent to Geneva for counsel and for men to pastor their churches. Geneva with its Calvin was able to put a stamp of character and conviction upon those it trained that made them dynamic spiritual influences wherever they went. Witness John Knox.

One of the most interesting features of the Register is the presentation of a host of men who ministered in those days and a setting forth of the nature and place of their ministries. Space is given in telling of some of those who were opponents of the Calvinistic faith. One of the most prominent of these was Michael Servetus, whose denial of the doctrine of the trinity and the true deity of Christ is fully discussed and refuted in the Register.

The material in the Register appears chronologically. Each chapter has as its heading the year under consideration in bold type and in the chapter is presented what happened during that year.

The work is recommended to those who are interested in the subject of church history and in particular that phase of church history which finds John Calvin at the center of things.

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